

Title of Session: School Counselors
Moderator: Barbara Muller-Ackerman
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Room: On Tap Café

BarbaraMu: Do we want to get started BJ? We have lost Susan and Karen but hopefully they will be back?!

MonijitK: Well my name is Moni and I am a preservice teacher in Houston Texas in association with the University of Houston.. I plan to teach the fifth grade ..though I am only certified until the fourth..I'll sneak my way in! I just came from another heavy discussion on tapped in so it may take a minute for my mind to adjust

MonijitK: oh I feel special is it just me!

SusanR joined the room.

BJ: yes, Barbara...and it looks like Monijit is all warmed up for you!

BJ: wb, Sue

BarbaraMu: Thanks for the introduction Moni. My name is Barbara Muller-Ackerman and I am an elementary counselor in NJ.

MonijitK: I apologize for my casual typing..it's just when I type I think fast and so I type fast and don't care about punctuation etc...

BJ: since Monijit introduced herself, how about if we do likewise?

BJ: we're pretty casual here, Monijit

BarbaraMu: Works for me. Thanks for being here.

MonijitK: sorry for jumping ahead BJ but that last discussion just has me juiced....

BJ: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In

SusanR: K to 8 Occasional Teacher from Ottawa, Ontario Canada

BarbaraMu: Occasional?

BarbaraMu: Okay, well we are going to be covering resources for school counselors as well as some wonderful sites put up by counselors themselves.

SusanR: Substitute Teacher..today I was in the Computer Lab

BarbaraMu: Thanks for the explanation!

BarbaraMu: There are so many areas that counselors deal with that are also great resources for teachers.

BarbaraMu: One of them, for sure, is behavior.

SusanR: That's my main concern coming into a classroom as a sub..

BarbaraMu: The Master Teacher, out of Kansas, has a site called You Can Handle Them All. Take a look at <http://www.disciplinehelp.com/home.cfm>

BJ: sounds like this would be great for our preservice teachers!

KarenMar joined the room.

SusanR: I think it's every preservice teacher's concern!

BJ: yay! Welcome back, Karen

BarbaraMu: Glad you could make it, Karen!

BJ: we're looking at a site good for behavior issues, Karen:

<http://www.disciplinehelp.com/home.cfm>

KarenMar: Good to be back

SusanR: I had to deal with "THE RUDE" today...only one incidence..rest of the day was perfect

BarbaraMu: Another issue that comes up in the classroom a lot is grief - there are classroom ideas at <http://www.allchildrengrieve.org>

MonijitK: slow down plz

BarbaraMu: Will do.

MonijitK: we are looking at disciplinehelp right?

MonijitK: or all children grieve?

BarbaraMu: We can do that as long as you would like.

BarbaraMu: When you are done investigating, try the grief resource.

MonijitK: ok

BJ . o O (the urls will be in your transcript)

MonijitK: I'm sorry this tech stuff is really great and really overwhelming at the same time

BJ smiles and understands how Monijit feels!

MonijitK: the all children grieve site is not found

SusanR: I think its...<http://www.allkidsgrieve.org/>

BJ . o O (that's why the transcript is so nice to have)

MonijitK: k that worked

BarbaraMu: Sorry, you are right. I wasn't copying from my usual list!

BarbaraMu: Thanks for the correction!

BarbaraMu: In classrooms, you will also find children with chronic illnesses. The site, Blackboards and Band-aids has a lot of wonderful material for parents and children.

<http://www.faculty.fairfield.edu/fleitas/contents.html>

BarbaraMu: Are there any questions so far?

MonijitK: I really like these sites

SusanR: Is there anything out there on the web that could be a course of study.

BJ: a course of study for teachers, Sue?

SusanR: yes, on character education

BJ: Barbara led a discussion on character ed last month...

BarbaraMu: Other than checking in with counselor education programs at school, no. But there are a lot of districts which have put a lot of frameworks out there...standards, competencies, lesson plans to go through the counseling curriculum.

MonijitK: what is character ed?

BJ . o O (look at the transcript, Sue)

BJ lets Barbara give the definition of Character Ed

BarbaraMu: The development of a person's character - personal sense of ethics and morality - development of traits which make for a good citizen, all go into character education.

BJ . o O (transcripts are at www.tappedin.org/transcripts)

MonijitK: oh ok

BarbaraMu: There are many links in the transcripts of state departments of education and districts which have laid out, grade by grade, lessons and activities for character education.

BarbaraMu: Utah has done a great job at http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/char_ed/

SusanR: I like the literature suggestions

http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/curr/char_ed/resc/bib1-6.html

SusanR: Great bibliography!!!

BarbaraMu: On an elementary counseling level though, there are some sites where counselors have shared their work. The Minneapolis St. Paul counselors have their units up at <http://mis.spps.org/counselors/units.html>

BarbaraMu: Sue- there are a lot of good booklists for character education. I think there are a bunch in that last transcript.

BarbaraMu: They tend to break out by trait which make them easy to work with.

MonijitK: how can a teacher such as myself teach character building etc incorporated into a classroom setting?

SusanR: I am definitely going to check back, Barbara.

MonijitK: ok i guess that answers my question

BarbaraMu: It is very easy to integrate into literature...social studies...really almost every subject area.

BarbaraMu: We have a school wide program so we focus on a character trait each two months and have common language which is used by every one in the school.

MonijitK: that sounds really interesting

BarbaraMu: We all work on respect or responsibility or caring and have lots of posters, activities, lessons, class meetings which focus on developing those concepts.

BarbaraMu: Teachers use "responsibility checks" or "respect checks" to cue their students for a specific set of behaviors.

SusanR: One school I was at picks a trait per month..that's the main focus and it culminates in a school assembly

BarbaraMu: For example, doing a "responsibility check" at the end of the day means that students ask themselves a series of questions related to packing up/going home. Are they being responsible in remembering what they need to do their best?

BarbaraMu: One a month seems fast. In the early childhood campus they work on self-control (as a sub-set of responsibility) for the first 3 months.

MonijitK: in class the other day I learned that by the fifth and sixth grade the character is pretty much set and predictions can be made on a person's future..but do u think that these responsibility chex etc are pretty much deleted..or can be at least with experiences and associations in later grades and even college

MonijitK: predictions on the success of the person socially i mean

MonijitK: by observing their behavioral patterns...

BJ: speaking as a teacher in a male juvenile correctional facility, I would say no, Monijit...kids need reinforcement of values ...and so do some adults!

MonijitK smiles

BarbaraMu: It's one of the reasons we start with teaching school counseling lessons at the youngest levels. Here is a school counselors website. Sue, you will like to tie in to books here too. There are goals for each grade and then books which work for them.

http://67.105.243.83/crookedbillet/Counselor/Counselor_Web_Page/Home_page/Title_Page.htm

MonijitK: I think I would feel reluctant to feel good about a batch of kids graduating from my class with excellent character because I feel like it can be so easily disrupted and altered by bad teachers, peer pressure, and general life experiences.

BarbaraMu: check each of the grades and the associated book suggestions. That gives you some sense of their curriculum for that school.

BJ: here's a pithy quote from the person who is going to be a guest on the next alt/correctional ed discussion: The definition of at-risk is broadened to not only mean at-risk of dropping out of school, but also at-risk of not succeeding in life. Obviously many people who have gotten a diploma have not been well prepared to deal with life, and if education continues to bury its head in the sand with the belief that children are well-served just to have academic content thrust at them then our welfare and prison counts will continue to swell in number.

BJ: www.AtRiskEducation.Net

BarbaraMu: A school counselors curriculum is involved in the development of the whole child. There is academic development as part but then there is also personal/social development and also career development- if you think of career as life-long learning and exploration of the self and what you can do for work

MonijitK: I understand..and I think that because I am still preservice..and haven't been broken in..I still feel like I have the weight of the world on my shoulders, and that I am solely responsible for every aspect of every student in my class and would be completely devastated if there was even one that I couldn't reach

BJ gives Monijit a BIG HUG!

BarbaraMu: You are not in a school alone. And reaching out to a school counselor is one resource that you can enlist to support you in your work with children.

SusanR: I can recall feeling that way early in my career, Monijit

BJ: That doesn't have anything to do with being preservice...that just means you're a dedicated educator, Monijit.

BarbaraMu: Interdependence is an important lesson within a school and in life for the students and adults alike.

BJ: and you do have lots of support...that is one of the main reasons I like Tapped In so much...collegial support

MonijitK: sorry if I've lead us on a tangent

MonijitK: yes it is really great..

MonijitK: we were assigned to visit 2 times..but I will be back for sure!

BJ cheers for Monijit and wonders if Barbara feels we've been off topic?

BarbaraMu: The internet has been invaluable for school counselors too. Many of us are isolates in our buildings, especially at an elementary level. The internet has given us tons of colleagues to share stories and cases and support and lessons with

BarbaraMu: I'm fine with where we are.

BJ: this kind of discussion is really valuable for us all...experienced and new teachers alike

SusanR nods in agreement..

MonijitK: I agree

BJ: I think experienced teachers sometimes get complacent or just overwhelmed and choose the path of least resistance

SusanR: at the elementary level we have lost our school counselors due to budget cuts

BarbaraMu: Its problematic here as well Sue.

BJ values Barbara's contributions to Tapped In even more!

BarbaraMu: Elementary counselors are often thought of as a luxury- but as anyone knows who is in education, the earlier we teach skills, the better! The foundational learning of prevention skills are really critical.

BarbaraMu: Thanks BJ

MonijitK: well in our district we still have counselors but most kids don't visit

SusanR: so this is a valuable session, Barbara

BarbaraMu: School counselors on an elementary level rarely sit in their office waiting for visitors.

MonijitK: I remember I went to my counselor cuz she reached out to me and developed a relationship with me..but most kids don't get that ..most don't even know who the counselor is..and it's mostly the kids that need them

BarbaraMu: I am teaching at least 3 periods a day in classrooms.

MonijitK: and that wasn't until high school

SusanR: elementary classrooms, Barb

BarbaraMu: I have a curriculum and content to impart beyond the groups and in-service work, parent consultation and teacher consultation.

BarbaraMu: But school counseling Pre-K through 12 has the same curriculum and middle school counselors are in classes as well.

BarbaraMu: It gets tougher as you move up as teachers become more reluctant to give up content time...

BarbaraMu: but school counselors are trying to be in classrooms affecting all students instead of the old model where counselors would spend 90% of their time with only 10% of the students.

BarbaraMu: I also spend a lot of time giving resources to teachers so that they can either teach or extend the counseling competencies. That's where I have learned a lot from you Sue.

SusanR blushes

BarbaraMu: I put a lot of material in teachers' boxes to point them toward things to make their lives easier.

BarbaraMu: I think we are about out of time...

MonijitK: well thank you guys so much for all this new information

BJ . o O (after food, teachers like resources and materials the best)

BarbaraMu: Is there anything else anyone would like to ask. We really didn't hit many web sites - and there are many - but I appreciate the opportunity to dialogue.

SusanR laughs

MonijitK: I think I am starting to appreciate the internet again

MonijitK: the list of websites is at the transcripts link right?

BJ: Thanks, Barbara. This was good...better than just websites.

BJ nods to Monijit

MonijitK: great

BJ: Barbara, you might want to think about a group room

BarbaraMu: Sue, if you need anything else on character ed, let me know.

BJ: then you could put up any resources that you have

SusanR: Thanks Barbara

BarbaraMu: I know I spend a ton of time in Sue's!

BJ . o O (and the room could be a Counselor's Resource Room)

BJ: you certainly have enough material to put in a resource room

BarbaraMu: yes

MonijitK: yes please do

SusanR: Start a Group Room and post those resources; preservice teachers would be most appreciative.

BJ: Monijit, Sue leads the K-3 resources discussion

SusanR: Balanced Literacy is the Topic for April

MonijitK: ok thanks

SusanR: I will go there now

BarbaraMu: I'll be there.

SusanR left the room.

MonijitK: bye ladies...

BarbaraMu: Good night

MonijitK left the room (signed off).

BJ: thanks again, Barbara