



OECS EDUCATION REFORM UNIT (OERU)

GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS' HANDBOOK

**OERU
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OECS Education Reform Unit (OERU)

GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS' HANDBOOK
(Draft)

**Based on proceedings of a Workshop held in Antigua and Barbuda
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And on materials supplied by OECS member countries**

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale

During the years 1998 and 1999 the OECS Education Reform Unit conducted a Student Attitude Survey in the nine OECS countries. This survey resulted from a concern that students in the Eastern Caribbean were displaying signs of alienation from the educational process. The aim of the survey was to “better understand students’ hopes, fears, aspirations and ambitions as well as their attitudes towards school work and their future lives,” (OERU 1999). The research process involved the use of structured questionnaires completed by students and teacher ratings of students’ performance and behaviour. There were also focus group discussions with out-of-school youth, parents and teachers.

Survey results pointed to a need to provide learning support systems for all secondary school students. This finding was presented to OECS Ministers of Education in the form of a recommendation that reads as follows:

Recommendation 2d: Provide learning support systems for all secondary school students
This recommendation addresses the need to provide greater diversification of curricula that address a variety of interests, needs and problems of students... There is also a clear need to increase the number of guidance counsellors in the educational systems, particularly in secondary schools. Also attempts should be made to ensure that guidance counsellors have adequate opportunity to share expertise and experiences across member states in order to promote an overall increase in the knowledge and skill level of these professionals.

Based on this recommendation and feedback from a meeting of OECS guidance officers and counsellors in St Kitts and Nevis, the OECS Education Reform Unit developed this Guidance Counsellors Handbook.

To facilitate the development of this handbook, a group of guidance officers and counsellors came together for a two-day workshop. The meeting allowed for an examination and analysis of information on existing manuals, policies and guidance activities, the articulation and development of policy guidelines, discussions of content and practice in the Region, and a general cross-fertilization of ideas.

The participants endorsed the need for a “whole school approach” to guidance and counselling. A “whole school approach” moves the focus of counselling from remediation to prevention and student development. As such it involves teachers in a guiding instead of a referral contact with students. Such a system is proactive rather than reactive, “is collaboratively planned and delivered, permeates the school curriculum, and contributes to the school atmosphere.” (Hui, 2000, p. 74).

The guidance officers and counsellors also proposed the framework for a handbook that would best meet their needs. The two consultants who facilitated the workshop were then given the responsibility for preparing the document.

1.2 Brief Review of Relevant Research

In November 2000, the OECS Education Reform Unit hosted a professional development workshop in Early Identification/Early Intervention in Dominica, as a follow-up to the Student Attitude Survey that was conducted during 1998-1999. The workshop's main goal was:

“to enable guidance counsellors and other relevant officers to develop the capacities to implement early intervention and preventive management of social, behavioural and cognitive problems in the classroom.”

A public panel discussion, as part of that workshop, emphasized the need for a “whole school approach” to guidance counselling, and the need for working partnerships among classroom teachers, guidance officers and counsellors. The panel further recommended that all teachers should be equipped with basic guidance and counselling skills. The counsellor's role was seen as one of collaboration with and support of the entire school system.

This recommendation from Dominica closely mirrors discussions that have been ongoing in international circles over the past two decades. The authors of the book, *Counselling and Guidance in Schools* (McLaughlin, Clark, and Chisholm, 1996), traced the history of counselling in schools and endorsed the view that “counselling skills are a necessary part of every teacher's repertoire” (p. 2). However, they advocated that there were different levels of guidance and counselling, and differentiated the specialist counsellor role from that of the classroom teacher.

The developers of a Guidance and Counselling Programme Curriculum in Bermuda have agreed with the above position stated above. They affirm that, “the implementation of comprehensive developmental guidance and counselling means a major shift from a crisis intervention approach to a preventative approach” (Outerbridge, 1999, p. 119). Such a programme requires “not only specialized knowledge and skills ... but also requires system support as counsellors implement and maintain effective school counselling programs.” (Outerbridge, 1999, p. 119).

Permeating these discussions is the challenge of ensuring that the role of the guidance counsellor remains pivotal to the educational system. Gysbers (1999) reflects, “*Although counsellors are often seen as peripheral to the mainstream of education, they in fact occupy a crucial position*” (p 357). The author argues that the non-guidance tasks, which counsellors are often asked to perform, prevent them from executing their true guidance and counselling tasks and negatively affect the contribution they can make to the entire system. Lapan, Gysbers, Hughey and Sun (1997) reported that students in schools where guidance programmes were fully implemented *were more likely to report that they had*

earned better grades, their education was relevant to their future, and their school had a more positive climate.

Policy development is critical to the role of counsellors in the educational system. A policy is a set of guidelines that are “designed to influence and determine decisions and actions” (Gysbers, 2000). It is therefore recommended that guidance officers and counsellors should be active participants in the formulation of policies that affect the importance of guidance and counselling programmes in the holistic school programme.

After analyzing the guidance and counselling policies of twenty-four American states schools Gysbers (2000) noted:

“Helping our children and young people along with their parents face the challenges of today and tomorrow will require the strongest overall system of education including guidance and counselling that our nation can provide. If this is to occur, we believe that school board policies for guidance must be written so that guidance and counselling are seen as an integral and transformative program, not as a marginal and supplemental position” (p. 353).

Research in the Caribbean has continued to point to the need for comprehensive programmes for our children, which include counselling. *The Pan American Health Organization’s Plan of Action of Health and Development of Adolescents and Youth in the Americas, 1998-2001*, reports: “Adolescents need adequate nutrition, as well as access to quality education and health services, including counselling” (p.17). The same report endorses the fact that adolescents’ healthy development requires safe and supportive environments in the family, schools, communities and health care systems.

A WHO and PAHO publication, *A Portrait of Adolescent Health in the Caribbean 2000*, states that although most young people in the Caribbean are doing well, there are multiple issues facing some youth. The publication recommends that:

“...successful strategies treat youth holistically, start at an early age, offer youth a variety of growth and development opportunities that are appropriate to their age and experience...we need policies, legislation, programs and services that address the root causes of adolescent health problems: education, unemployment, family conflict...Efforts should aim to ...improve adolescent environments through schools, community and family...” (p. 30)

In another publication by PAHO and the Kellogg Foundation, *The Legislative and Policy Environment for Adolescent Health in Latin America and the Caribbean*, the writers show the clear link between attitudes and health.

“Positive self-esteem and attitudes achieved from a sense of empowerment improve the mental health and overall well-being of adolescents, while conversely maintaining excellent individual health and being supported by an enabling environment advances the process of youth empowerment. (Rodriguez-Garcia, Russell, Maddaleno, and Kastrinakis, [1999] p. 42).

Much research has focused on the importance of the school environment and the child's view of himself or herself in that environment. Concern about adolescent's engagement with school has been linked with the way in which the school environment may influence students' social goal orientations and their perceptions of the school's ability to satisfy their need for feelings of self-worth (Urdan & Maehr, 1995).

Research by Osterman illustrates how three dimensions of classroom practice have an impact on students' sense of relatedness: methods of instruction, teacher support, and authority relationships between teachers and students. Cooperative learning and dialogue were seen as crucial to students' motivation. It was further noted that, "teachers play a major role in determining whether students feel that they are cared for and that they are a welcome part of the school community." (Osterman, [2000] p.351).

Several studies also stress the importance of a cooperative school environment where children learn to resolve conflict constructively. Poorly resolved conflicts create numerous threats to success in school including lower achievement and lower self-esteem and self-efficacy (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). The research notes, however, that there is a need for more training in how to live together harmoniously as we seek to reduce the competitiveness in the school environment and increase the level of cooperation and communication. The multiple roles of the counsellor, as a service provider, trainer and supervisor of teachers in counselling skills, and coordinator of a comprehensive guidance programme, cannot be overstated as we strive to make our classrooms safe havens for our children.

What has been said of the Bermudan community earlier probably speaks for counselling systems throughout the Eastern Caribbean:

"The challenge for counsellors, educators, administrators, and the Bermudan community is the understanding that a comprehensive developmental guidance and counselling program is collaborative and needs to be an integral part of the education process, so that educational experiences are provided that promote the development and excellence of all students." (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994).

In their book, *Counselling in Schools*, Bovair & McLaughlin, (1994) note that guidance and counselling services in schools have both a developmental and reactive role. They assert that, in preparing children for responsible adulthood, schools have not only an educative function, but also a reflective or evaluative function and a welfare function. A successful guidance and counselling programme contributes to the realization of the schools' goals by creating linkages between the services it offers and the school's activities.

The guidance programme supports the educative function of the school by its framework of personal, vocational and educational guidance. The reflective function of the school is related to an exploration of the impact of the school on the personal and social development as well as the mental health of the students. It can be argued then: "the role of counselling is to promote healthy institutions as well as healthy individuals" (Bovair et al, 1994, p. 43). While these two functions involve more proactive and developmental

interventions, the welfare aspect of guidance and counselling are the areas that are commonly focused on in discussions on counselling in schools. This emphasis includes more prevention and remediation activities and is generally more reactive in nature.

From the above discussions it can be seen that guidance and counselling services should be pervasive throughout the school programme. The school can only actualize its role of promoting development in all dimensions of the child's life if it becomes a "guidance community" (Hamblin 1974) where all the stakeholders are committed to meeting the needs of the child in a facilitative, growth-enhancing manner.

1.3 Common Elements of Existing Country Programmes

A review of guidance and counselling programmes in OECS territories has revealed many commonalities in terms of the way these programmes function and the resources that are available to them.

All of the programmes that were examined reflected similar goals which, in theory, dictated the focus of the services offered. These goals were all directed toward development, prevention and remediation. Based on these goals, services in the countries focused on academic/educational, personal, social, career, and school support concerns.

Topics that were covered in these areas included Personal Development, Self-Concept, Interpersonal Relationships, Conflict Resolution, Career Education, Study Skills, Goal Setting, Decision-making, Communication Skills, Human Sexuality, Drug Prevention Education, Abuse, Family Issues. However, these topics either were not always dealt systematically, or were infused into the Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) programme.

Guidance and counselling policies were not fully developed in any of the territories. Countries did not seem to have a stated policy, but some countries have begun the process of policy development.

Counselling services also have not been developed formally in most cases. Services do not seem to be part of the formal scheduling process. Guidance and counselling are often perceived as "crisis intervention" services, and there is usually stigma attached to visits to the counsellor.

All countries reported a shortage of trained guidance officers and counsellors and also a lack of clarity regarding their roles. Counsellors do not generally have job descriptions, and were often used as substitute teachers. In many cases counsellors did not feel supported by administrators or government policy makers. There was also some reported friction between counsellors and school principals.

Countries reported that enough time was not allotted to the counselling function due to the low status accorded to the position. There is also a reported shortage of resources for

use by counsellors. Most services do not have assigned counselling rooms where confidentiality may be assured. Confidential record storage is also a challenge and, given the general lack of resources, there is usually no access to confidential secretarial support.

Counsellors reported there was no qualification standard for appointment as counsellors and in some countries teachers with no counselling experience were assigned counselling duties. Counsellors were also concerned about liability and other legal issues, especially those related to reporting and confidentiality.

1.4 Objectives of the Handbook

The main objective in developing this Handbook is:

To provide a useful resource for guidance officers and counsellors and others persons (teachers) involved in counselling in the educational systems of OECS countries.

More specifically the handbook is intended to provide:

- an overview of the commonalities in guidance and counselling services across the Eastern Caribbean with a view to policy harmonization;
- some insight into current international research on guidance and counselling as it coincides with the needs identified in the Region;
- counsellors with guidelines for dealing with some of the critical concerns in the field ;
- validation of the important role of counsellors in the educational system and provide support for them as they seek to offer holistic guidance and counselling programmes in their communities.

The overall goal of the Guidance and Counselling function within the school system is **to prepare OECS students to meet success in important life settings**. This function is delivered through a combination of student developmental, preventive and remedial services that meet the needs of all students.

The specific objectives of the guidance function are to:

- promote students' general mental health and educational achievement;
- minimize the development of students' problems through early identification and intervention;
- promote social, personal, emotional, and behavioural adjustment;

- provide remedial counselling to students with identified problems;
- foster the development of productive careers by providing guidance in career choices.

These objectives are summarized in the logical framework presented below. The model also presents the variety of inputs that will have an impact on guidance and counselling services, the types of activities in which they will be involved and the expected outputs of such services.

Guidance and counselling are school system functions, integrated within or with links to the larger school, community and health and social service systems. According to the resources and traditions of jurisdictions, they organize their resources and systems to actualize that function – usually through sets of (remedial, individual counselling) services and (prevention, group-based) programmes delivered by specialized resources, as well as throughout the regular activities of non-specialists.

1.5. Logic Model for Comprehensive OECS Guidance System

A logic model is a diagram of the overall operation of a programme, service or function. It is intended to show the logical, causal links between the goal the programme intends to achieve and how the programme actually achieves it, the resources it uses, how it uses them, and with what results. It can help identify weaknesses in the structure of a programme: for example, the resources used may not be adequate to achieve the desired short- and long-term effects. It can also highlight the complexity of the links among different people and organizations that are required to produce the benefits, pointing the way to a better understanding of challenges and difficulties in achieving the desired results.

Inputs are human, financial and materials resources, and their organization.

Activities are programmes, services, products, transactions that transform the inputs into outputs.

Outputs are the direct productions of the programme: the transformation of resources into something that is delivered to clients or users.

Short-term effects are the immediate results of the services on its clients or users.

Long-term impacts are the results of the programme in several years' time: they should be directly related directly to the goal and objectives.

GOAL:

Position OECS students to meet success in important life settings

**OBJECTIVES:**

Development Prevention Remediation

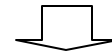
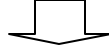
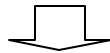
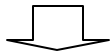
1. Educational achievement
2. Social/personal/emotional/behavioural adjustment
3. Productive career and citizenship

**INPUTS:**

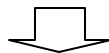
Ministry Policy Mechanisms Priorities	Other agencies FLHC AIDS Church	Counsellors Positions Training and development	Teachers Skills Attitudes	Students Family support Abilities Attitudes	School management Effectiveness Supportiveness Organisation	Legal framework Regulation Certification
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ACTIVITIES:

Planning Resourcing Marketing Evaluating	Creating, maintaining and using referral networks	Case/individual/ family counselling	Developing and implementing the guidance curriculum	Developing school and community support for education
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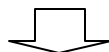
**Outputs:**

1	2	3	4	5
Links of guidance system to students' outcomes are clear	Students are appropriately referred and system-wide resources are used efficiently	Students are counselled effectively	Students receive the guidance curriculum completely and effectively	There is a high level of school and community support

**SHORT TERM EFFECTS:**

Through a continuum of services and supports, from development to prevention to remediation:

1. Students' educational achievement is maximized
2. Students are socially/personally/emotionally/behaviourally well-adjusted
3. Students have the personal resource necessary to develop productive careers and become fully achieved citizens

**LONG TERM IMPACTS**

OECS students meet success in important life settings

CHAPTER TWO: LEGAL ISSUES

Guidance counsellors and other professionals working with children in the educational system have expressed a need for greater clarity concerning the legal principles under which they operate. Such principles embody the rights of students, counsellors, teachers, and parents. The credibility, and therefore the success of the system, depends on these stakeholders' perception that their rights are being respected.

Concerns about confidentiality, reporting, protection, liability, recording and access to records must be addressed. The roles of the various helpers and the parameters within which they operate must also be defined clearly. Greater clarity about their roles would enable counsellors and teachers to have a certain level of comfort as they function in their respective capacities. This clarity and comfort would lead to the satisfaction of Objective #2 which relates to the social/personal/emotional/behavioural adjustment of children and would produce the result defined in Output # 4 that requires students receive the guidance curriculum completely and effectively.

2.1 Confidentiality and Reporting

The following principles should guide confidentiality within the counselling function.

- The primary responsibility of the counsellor is to act in the best interest of the student.
- The school counsellor should inform the student of the conditions under which she or he will receive counselling prior to the beginning of the counselling/client relationship. These conditions include the extent to which confidentiality can be maintained as guided by the laws of the country in which the counsellor operates and the need to consult with other professionals. Generally, the conditions under which confidentiality may be breached have legal implications: i.e. abuse of a minor, suicidal ideation, threats of physical assault.
- Barring the above conditions, the school counsellor should obtain the written consent of the student before releasing information obtained during the counselling relationship.
- Please note that teachers are not permitted to promise total confidentiality.
- The following levels of confidentiality used with guidelines at a school in Britain (Ramsey Abbey School) might be of some assistance to counsellors and especially to teachers.

Stage One: Identification of the type of information:

Medical Information

Behaviour in school

Behaviour out of school

Specific problems, e.g. sex, drugs, alcohol, bullying, truancy, mental health, etc.

Academic standards

Child Abuse

Child Neglect

Bereavement – death, separation, divorce

Involvement of outside agencies

Stage Two: Points to Consider When Deciding How to Respond to a Piece of Information

1. Is it confidential? If so, is it the information itself, the source of the information, or both?
2. How might your decision affect your relationship with the person who gave it to you? (i.e. a question of trust)
3. What is the expectation of the person giving the information? (i.e. Why were you told? (For advice, action or information?))
4. What repercussions do you envisage as a result of taking action? (Try to think through all the options carefully.)
5. What is the element of risk/danger to that person or others?
6. Under what circumstances has the information been passed on? Has there been a request for confidentiality?
7. What is the legal position? School policy?
8. Do you have time to deal with this issue?
9. Do you feel confident/able to deal with the issue?
10. Who already knows?
11. Do you need to discuss this matter with another person before making a decision?

Stage Three: Deciding the status of the information:

Highly confidential

Confidential

The above categories would be on restricted access, i.e. purely on a need-to-know basis.

Sensitive

Information would be passed to those who have direct contact, e.g. subject staff, group tutor, senior management team, school nurse, SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) etc.

Accessible to staff

Information which is in the public domain, but may need careful handling

Accessible to all

Information which is in the public domain, i.e. non-confidential

Stage Four: Choice of the appropriate route for passing the information

1. Distribution to all staff via briefing.
2. Distribution to particular staff e.g. subject staff, group tutor
3. Pass it up, across or down the pastoral chain e.g. Group tutor to Head of Year. This implies some responsibility to pass it on for information or action.
4. Take it straight to the Head or Deputies.
5. Pass it on to outside agencies via the appropriate channels.
6. Pass it on to parents.
7. Keep it to yourself.

Source: *Counselling and Guidance in Schools*, 1996, McLaughlin et al. (1996, p.23)

2.2. Access to Records

Much of the information obtained during counselling sessions is sensitive and must be treated confidentially. It may be necessary to share relevant information with staff for decision-making about situations affecting students in the classroom. Counsellors must protect their credibility by ensuring the confidentiality of sensitive records.

There are three categories of student records:

Student General Records

These are usually kept by the school administrators and are available to classroom teachers. Counsellors may include general information about guidance and counselling services in these records. These records are available to parents.

Confidential Reports

Confidential reports from outside agencies should be shared with the counsellor, referring and receiving teacher, and the school administrator. These records assist the school in the appropriate placement of students in the school system, and in providing any support that might be necessary.

Counselling Records

These records are the responsibility of the school counsellor. Counsellors should maintain records of who was interviewed, when the interview took place, for what purpose and suggested action taken. This record may be kept as a daily log and should **not** be placed in the student's cumulative files. Counsellors may keep more detailed notes for their personal information.

2.3 Role of Guidance Counsellors and Other Professionals

Many professionals have a role to play in the care of students as they go through the school system. These professionals include guidance officers, counsellors, teachers, education officers, principals, curriculum officers, psychologists, social workers, school nurses, education welfare or truancy officers, and those working in community agencies.

The roles of the guidance officer, counsellor and teacher will be described in Section 4, Appendix One, which includes material from a St Lucian counselling proposal, and provides more information on how the various stakeholders may interact with the system at various levels.

2.4 Boundaries and Legal Role of Counsellors and Teachers

The relationship between a counsellor and his or her client is one that is based on confidentiality and trust, save for the legal requirement to break confidentiality if the situation involves criminal intent and harm to self or others. (See Section 2.1). Information shared with the counsellor is held in confidence, unless there has been an agreement for disclosure at the beginning of the relationship. The counsellor should obtain the client's permission before disclosing such information, even for case consultation and referral. The counsellor should be protected by law, in accordance with the legal framework of the country, regarding any information obtained during counselling and released to legal authorities. The counsellor may be held liable for withholding criminal information that may lead to the potential harm of the client or any other individual.

It is important that clear legal boundaries be established within which counsellors should operate. In this context it is important for the Ministry of Education to be aware of the roles, responsibilities and rights of counsellors.

There is also a need for the legal protection of counsellors especially in their relationships with students. Counsellors should acquaint themselves with the laws governing minors. Laws should be put in place to make the reporting of certain issues mandatory, for example, rape.

Example: A child tells you that his mother and step father have several fights. His step father accuses his mother of an ongoing relationship with the child's father. He threatens that one day he is going to kill them both and then kill himself. He owns a gun. The child is afraid of his step father and has begged his mother to leave him before he kills them. The child confides in you but begs you not to tell anyone because he is afraid of what his step father might do to him.

There is the need to be cognizant of the different levels of confidentiality, specifically in relation to the roles of teacher and of counsellor. **There is sometimes concern about parents' expectations that counsellors would divulge all information they received in sessions with their children. The counsellor does not have to disclose this information unless there are legal implications, as indicated earlier. In other cases verbal or written consent should be clearly stated.**

A teacher does not have to inform the principal of information shared by a student unless the principal specifically requests that this be done. However, the rules regarding the disclosure of information which is potentially criminal, apply. The teacher should exercise her or his discretion about what information might be disclosed (see Section 2.1). However, because a teacher is under a “duty to work under the reasonable discretion of the Head teacher” (McLaughlin et al., 1996), he or she can never promise total confidentiality. A teacher maintains the right to report incidents in the classroom and should disclose any relevant information which is needed for the protection of the child. In the case of a legal dispute the principal can only protect the teacher if important information with potentially legal consequences has been shared. The classroom teacher is normally protected under the laws that govern his or her employment.

2.5 Role of Counsellors in Maintaining Discipline

Reviews of programmes in conflict resolution and peer mediation have indicated that students who have had training in conflict resolution and peer mediation are able to resolve their conflicts constructively (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). The counsellor is in a privileged position to provide this type of training for children. Of course, it would necessitate that she or he is professionally equipped to conduct such training. This might point to a need for further professional development in this area for some counsellors. (See Appendix)

It is important for teachers to undergo some extensive training in classroom management. There is a need for a protocol to be established for the management of cases that involve the suspension of students or students who may be sent outside during class time. There is an urgent need to devise an appropriate system which does not de-motivate and alienate students who repeat classes. Counsellors’ positive contribution in these areas can lead to the well-adjusted citizen who is characterized by meeting Objectives 2 and 3 in the Logic Model.

2.6 Licensing

In North America and Britain a professional association determines the requirements for licensing. This usually includes an examination to test competence after certain training criteria have been met. As counselling is becoming more available in the Caribbean the need to provide an accreditation system has become more necessary. Such accreditation protects the profession from misrepresentation by persons who are not qualified professionally. It further provides the licensed counsellor with credibility as she or he performs her or his functions.

Accreditation of counsellors in the OECS should be at both the local and sub-regional levels. It will be necessary to explore the establishment of OECS-wide standards and licensing procedures for counsellors. Individual countries should check existing legislation. Ministries of Education should investigate the courses offered at UWI with the view of licensing counsellors.

It is important to determine whether there are existing laws that govern the licensing of counsellors. The local Teachers' Association/Teachers' Union should be asked to approach the Caribbean Mental Health Association to assess whether any accreditation system exists or whether there is a plan to initiate such a system. The Teachers' Association/Union could also be asked to investigate the status of accreditation for counsellors in other countries. Recommendations could then be presented to the Ministry of Education for discussion with a view to the legislation of appropriate procedures. In addition, Counselling Associations should be formed on national and sub-regional levels. These Associations should network with the Caribbean Mental Health Association.

CHAPTER TWO - .LEGAL ISSUES

ISSUES	COUNSELLOR'S ROLE	TEACHER'S ROLE	PRINCIPAL/ SCHOOL'S ROLE
Confidentiality and Reporting	Maintain confidentiality except there are legal implications	A teacher can never promise full confidentiality. He/she must reveal information upon the request of the Principal. He/she must keep the Principal up to date with information which has legal implications.	Protect the teacher especially in the case of a legal dispute
Access to Records	The counsellor has access to all records pertaining to students. She or he must ensure that confidential records are not available to other except this is necessary for the counselling process.	Confidential records from outside agencies are shared with the teacher if this is necessary for the student's placement and classroom support. The teacher must be sure to keep this information confidential.	The Principal may have access to all records except the counsellors' detailed personal notes. He/she must respect the confidential nature of the information.
Discipline	Conduct training sessions in peer counselling, conflict resolution for the benefit of teachers and students.	Maintain discipline among the students.	Ensure that an atmosphere that fosters positive discipline is maintained.
Licensing	Work with Teachers' Associations to research, review and recommend licensing procedures for implementation	Lobby with their associations to support opportunities for them to receive training in counselling skills.	Support the training counsellors and teachers. Lobby with the Ministry for the legislation of licensing procedures for counsellors.

CHAPTER THREE: PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS

The maintenance of high standards of professionalism is critical to the acceptance of counselling as a viable vehicle for helping people deal effectively with the challenges in their lives. It is therefore essential that counsellors employ competent, responsible and ethical practices. In countries with a long history of counselling services, organizations have been developed to assume a monitoring and evaluating role. One such association, the British Association for Counselling (BAC), sees as its major motivation the “protection of the public from exploitation, and from irresponsible and incompetent practice” (McLaughlin, 1994).

In order to ensure the maintenance of high standards, accreditation must be offered to adequately qualified and experienced counsellors (See section 2.6), and counsellor training programmes must be monitored and evaluated.

The ethical guidelines that are central to the counselling process must be identified. Counsellors and others utilizing counselling skills must have the proper supervisory support. The profession must be under-girded by a sense of responsibility and accountability for the lives of those entrusted to their care.

3.1 Ethical Guidelines

According to White, Mullis, Earley and Brigman, (1995), a Code of Ethics should be based on the principle of ‘*doing no harm.*’ The authors continue by advising that, when in doubt, practitioners should consult with colleagues and supervisors and document their actions.

Using the concept of “doing no harm” as a benchmark, ethical guidelines should be developed to ensure competent standards in the following areas:

- ? *The quality of the programme* – Is it meeting the needs of its constituents?
Is it satisfying its expressed goals?
- ? *The quality of the providers* - Are they adequately qualified for the job?
Are they competent and professional?
- ? *The issue of confidentiality*
- ? *Support, supervision, training and development*

In *A Manual For Guidance Teachers in Secondary Schools in St Vincent and the Grenadines* Gloria Jack has identified ‘Some Ethical Standards for School Counsellors’ Counsellors can use these standards as a model for developing guidelines for their countries. They are reproduced below:

“School Counsellors subscribe to the following basic tenets of the counselling process from which professional responsibilities are derived:

- Each person has the right to respect and dignity as a human being and to counselling services without prejudice as to person, character, belief or practice.

- Each person has the right to self-direction and self-development.
- Each person has the right to choice and the responsibility for decisions rendered.

The counsellor assists in the growth and development of each individual and uses his or her highly specialized skills to ensure that the rights of the counsellee are properly protected within the structure of the school programme.

The counsellor – client relationship is private and thereby requires compliance with all laws and ethical standards pertaining to confidentiality.” (Unpublished document, p 4).

Jack then continues to outline the counsellor’s responsibilities to pupils, to self and to the profession. These responsibilities are listed below.

Responsibilities to Pupils

The School Counsellor:

1. *has a primary obligation and loyalty to the pupil, who is to be treated with respect as a unique individual;*
2. *is concerned with the total needs of the pupil (educational, vocational, personal and social) and encourages and assists the maximum growth and development of each counsellee;*
3. *refrains from consciously encouraging the counsellee’s acceptance of values, life-styles, plans, decisions and beliefs that represent only the Counsellor’s personal orientation;*
4. *protects the confidentiality of information received in the counselling process.*
5. *makes referrals to individuals or agencies who are equipped to meet the pupil’s needs which are outside of her or his area of competence.*

Responsibilities to Self

The School Counsellor:

1. *functions within the boundaries of individual professional competence and accepts responsibility for the consequences of his or her actions;*
2. *is aware of the potential effects of personal characteristics on services to clients;*
3. *monitors individual functioning and effectiveness and refrains from any activity likely to lead to inadequate professional services or harm to a client.*

Responsibilities to the Profession

The School Counsellor:

1. *conducts himself or herself in such a manner as to bring credit to self and the profession;*
2. *adheres to ethical standards of the profession and other official policy statements pertaining to counselling;*
3. *clearly distinguishes between statements and actions as a private individual and those made as those as a representative of the school counselling profession.*

3.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Counsellors have developed special expertise through training and experience. An effective counselling programme should provide for individual counselling during the student's academic career. A holistic school programme is one that meets the personal, psychosocial, academic, and vocational needs of the child. This programme requires individual counselling for which the counsellor is well equipped. The objectives of effective counselling services, as defined in the Logic Model, are developmental, preventive and remedial. The services of an effective counsellor are therefore pivotal to holistic development and the links to positive students' outcomes would be evident (Output #1). In this context there should be greater effort to de-stigmatize the service.

As the ratio of students per counsellor in the OECS countries is very high, every effort should be made to place high value on that expertise and derive maximum benefit from counsellors. Research has indicated that when a counsellor is allowed to perform the relevant counselling tasks, students succeed in all aspects of their school career (Gysbers et al., 1999). Counsellors should therefore be allowed to use their time doing the specialized job for which they have been trained. Their role as specialists in counselling should be protected.

Care should be taken not to confuse a classroom teacher who uses counselling skills with a professional counsellor. The main emphasis for the classroom teacher is teaching, while the counsellor's specialty is counselling. Nevertheless, our Logic Model clearly demonstrates that all stakeholders have an important role to play in the successful development of the child. Although teachers are mainly concerned with academic development it is important that they deal with a child in a manner that would complement rather than detract from the work of the counsellor.

While generally it is agreed that teachers should receive training in counselling skills, such training is not designed to qualify them for the role of a counsellor. However, due to the realization that the "whole school approach" to counselling is advocated today the teacher should receive training in counselling skills. A hierarchical perspective on the

levels of counselling required in the school system has been proposed in the literature (McLaughlin et al., 1996, Bovair et al., 1994). This approach suggests that there are three levels of counselling as outlined below:

Level One: *The immediate level*

All teachers should be equipped to contribute at this level. It means that all teachers should possess and be proficient in the use of basic counselling skills and be aware of what counselling is. Counselling skills will be used to facilitate good communication as well as to acknowledge the emotional dimension of learning and living. Teachers would be able to work in the emotional domain and detect signs of stress and tension in students. This strategy allows for early identification and intervention.

Level Two: *The intermediate level*

This level refers to the need for more continuity of care, concern and relationship. The severity of problems presented may necessitate regular and protracted individual counselling sessions for which classroom teachers usually have neither the time nor the competence. It is part of the school's pastoral role and the students may require more detailed counselling from those within or outside the school, depending on available expertise. The counsellors would be involved at this level.

Level Three: *The specialist level*

This level of work requires much more specialized training and expertise that may reside within or outside the school. The counsellor must decide whether the situation is one that he or she can handle or if there is need for referral to another agency or professional. The counsellor would be responsible for the coordination of these efforts.

Distinguishing among these levels of expertise may help teachers and counsellors to identify the nature and boundary of their specific contributions.

Best Practice:

The Ministry of Education in Grenada has developed an eight-session induction guidance module during a two-week induction course for teachers. The training for Health and Family Life (HFLE) also includes a unit on guidance techniques.

The specific responsibilities of the teacher in the provision of guidance services are:

- ? Participating on the school guidance and counselling team;
- ? Serving as an effective listener;
- ? Identifying and referring students with special needs;
- ? Consulting with parents and the counsellor to reach a mutual understanding of student behaviour and needs;
- ? Working with parents and providing parental support;
- ? Participating in the orientation of students;

- ? Providing good public relations for the school's guidance and counselling services;
- ? Assisting with the delivery of information on careers, social and emotional well-being, and academic information where such information may be appropriately incorporated into the curriculum.

The specific responsibilities of the counsellor are:

- ? Delivering counselling to students;
- ? Providing appropriate personal and social development services directly to groups of students;
- ? Providing leadership and direction, in consultation with the principal, for the school's guidance and counselling programme, in accordance with goals and objectives developed cooperatively;
- ? Acting as a member of the school support team, which includes teachers, administrators, support staff, and outside agencies;
- ? Coordinating, facilitating, and participating in professional development on guidance and counselling at the school level;
- ? Coordinating guidance and counselling programme evaluation at the school level;
- ? Assisting students, both as individuals and in groups, regarding their educational, career, and personal and social development through counselling, consultation and coordination of resources and services;
- ? Assisting in developing profiles of students (aptitudes, achievements, interests) and providing feedback on the curriculum needs of students where appropriate;
- ? Assisting teachers to incorporate guidance objectives in the regular curriculum;
- ? Acting as liaison for persons and agencies outside the school and within the home;
- ? Maintaining relations with feeder schools and post-secondary institutions;
- ? Assisting in providing information to teachers regarding the socio-emotional needs of children;
- ? Developing and maintaining awareness of referral resources in the outside community.

The above responsibilities for teachers and counsellors were adapted from the *River East School Division No.9 Counsellor Handbook*, (1985).

This information should be shared through Teachers' Association or through counsellors' organizations, if they exist.

3.3 Qualification

The nature of the counselling relationship places the counsellor in a position to influence the choices made by the client. It is therefore important that the counsellor be an individual who is well qualified in theoretical and practical psychological principles and practices. In addition, an effective counsellor would be an individual who possesses certain positive personality characteristics.

Counsellors should:

- Have a university degree in counselling from a recognized university. A Masters' degree is desirable. A transcript of courses taken will be required to help determine suitability.
- Have training in counselling skills and should have undertaken supervised practica in an accredited professional setting.
- Have a knowledge of counselling theory in the areas of adolescent and childhood growth and development, educational and career planning, communication, consultation, referral, crisis intervention, group process;
- Have professional teacher certification;
- Have had at least three years of successful teaching experience at the same level as their counselling position.

Guidance Counsellors should:

- Be knowledgeable about the developmental stages of life;
- Be able to form positive relationships with students, staff, parents, and other members of the community;
- Demonstrate personal qualities of understanding others, trust, empathy, maturity, conscientiousness, integrity, and initiative;
- Be able to work effectively with individuals and groups, as well as with groups of different ages;
- Possess effective organizational and management skills;
- Possess effective communication skills;
- Possess leadership skills.

If persons with the prerequisite training are not available teachers who are placed in the position of guidance officer or counsellor should seek opportunities to qualify themselves as soon as possible. Counsellors should lobby for the support of parents, teachers, and teachers' associations to help them to convince government that this area is seen as a priority for education. The profession of counselling should be discussed with students during career fairs and any other available opportunities, and students should be encouraged to see counselling as a possible career.

3.4 Multidisciplinary Approach – Relationship with Other Counsellors

Counsellors and teachers should always ensure that everything is done in the best interest of the child. Since no one professional possesses all the skills that are necessary to deal with the variety of challenges that he or she faces in school, a multidisciplinary approach becomes a necessity. A multidisciplinary approach ensures that all professionals who are providing services to children are consulted when their particular expertise is required. Such an approach would also involve regular case conferences for the coordination of the treatment plan and regular updates on the progress of the programme.

Members of such a team might include psychologists, social workers, special education staff, education welfare officers, truancy officers, school nurses, and other community service persons. Our Logic Model graphically demonstrates how the inputs from all the stakeholders are necessary to conduct the activities that would lead to the outputs identified. These outputs would contribute to meeting the objectives of the services offered.

Counsellors should assume the role of coordinator of guidance services within the school, coordinating activities and ensuring ongoing communication with all the persons working with the student. The counsellor should also coordinate the referral process to outside agencies and individuals and ensure appropriate follow up. Therefore, counsellors should be aware of the services available: that it should be part of their task to become informed of these services every year (**See Chapter 5**).

Guidelines should be developed to determine the parameters which define the extent to which a counsellor's expertise may provide effective intervention. To facilitate this process it is recommended that the Education Officer, with overall responsibility for counselling services, should call a meeting of all counsellors in the country. The objective of this meeting would be to devise guidelines for a referral system. These guidelines should be flexible enough for adaptation by the various schools, depending on the expertise of the counselling team available to them. The guiding principle should be that the child is served by the person or persons, available and accessible to him or her, who is most qualified to deal with the specific situation.

3.5 Professional Development

The counselling profession must respond to the changes in society by maintaining dynamism and flexibility. Counsellors must keep abreast with developments in the field by reading professional journals. They should also take advantage of any opportunity for

professional training that is available to them. Also, counsellors should endeavour to become members of a professional organization. These organizations usually host annual or biennial conferences at which there is exchange on advance in knowledge and practice in the field and opportunities for professional development. In addition, counsellors should seek to create networks with peers who share common interests. It is important for counsellors to meet regularly to discuss and share ideas nationally, regionally and internationally.

Funds should be designated in the government's education budget for training and development of counsellors. Principals should help counsellors gain access to these funds. Counsellors' Associations, if properly established, may also secure funds from relevant local and international agencies.

3.6 Rights

Every individual in the counselling relationship has rights that should be respected. There must be mutual respect for the rights of students, counsellors, teachers, and parents. In the Logic Model the inputs of Ministries of Education focus mainly on the development of policies, the establishment of mechanisms and prioritising issues. Their input in the area of the rights of the individual is critical for the development and ratification of legislation related to the rights of individuals in the counselling relationship. Some of those rights have been identified below:

Students have the right to:

have access to someone with whom they can share their concerns and challenges, both academic and personal;

have information shared kept confidential unless there are legal implications that jeopardize their health, welfare and safety or that of others;.

know when their disclosures cannot be kept confidential.

Parents have the right to:

have access to their child's general school records;

have access to other records if these are considered necessary for the welfare of the child;

be informed if their child who is under 16 years old is receiving special attention, such as learning support, but not necessarily if he or she is in individual counselling.

Teachers have the right to:

know the boundaries of their role in respect to counselling activities;

have their concerns about confidentiality addressed;

have their time respected;

have access to a private space to talk to students;

*be able to trust their colleagues;
have access to support and supervision;
have opportunities for ongoing training and development.*

Counsellors have the right to:

*know the boundaries of their role;
have their issues of confidentiality addressed;
have their time respected;
have access to a private space to talk to students
be able to trust their colleagues;
have access to support and supervision;
have opportunities for ongoing training and development;
have their specialist role respected;
make decisions which they consider to be in the best interest of the child;
be involved in the making of policies that affect the guidance and counselling programme in their school;
share their expertise by participating in the management team of the school.*

3.7 Supervision and Accountability

Systems must be put in place to ensure that all persons working with students have opportunities to receive mentoring and support on a regular basis. This support which can be obtained through case conferences or individual supervision is especially essential for teachers as they use their counselling skills. All persons working in a counselling relationship should be held accountable for the decisions they make. Teachers must ensure that they conform to the guidelines that govern their role. In cases where their roles involve the use of counselling skills the counsellor, in collaboration with the principal, will be responsible for setting up an effective system of supervision. Observance of this principle will lead to Output # 3 of the Logic Model that speaks to the effective counselling of students.

Counsellors should be provided with proper supervisory support and they should be required to avail themselves of this support. The supervisors should themselves have been trained in counselling. **The Guidance and Counselling Services should be headed by someone qualified to administer and supervise the programme** at the national level. A regular system of mentoring and support should also be provided for the counsellor.

3.8 Referrals

It is important that referrals from within the organization are handled professionally. The Logic Model emphasizes this fundamental concept under Activity # 2 and Output # 3: ***Clear guidelines for consultation/collaboration with other agencies should be established.*** Counsellors therefore, should use the following guidelines:

1. Inform teachers how the referral process works, including the importance of talking with the counsellor about the student. Ensure that the referral form is completed (See referral form in Appendix Two).

2. Avoid counselling students referred by teachers *without talking to the relevant teacher first*.
3. When talking to the teacher, the counsellor should be very specific about how he or she views the problem and what he or she thinks 'getting better' would look like.
4. Ask the teacher to explain to the student why he or she is being referred to the counsellor. The expectations about the meeting with the counsellor should be positive.
5. The counsellor should provide feedback to the teacher about the session with the student and involve the teacher in future plans.
6. The counsellor should obtain permission/consent of parents to obtain student data from non-school sources. Clear guidelines for consultation/collaboration with other agencies should be established.

Source: *Consultation in Schools* by White, J., Mullis, F., Earley, B., & Brigman, G., (1994).

CHAPTER 3 - PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS

ISSUES	COUNSELLOR'S ROLE	TEACHER'S ROLE	PRINCIPAL/ SCHOOL'S ROLE	MINISTRY'S ROLE
Ethical Guidelines	Responsible to the pupils, to him/herself and to the profession to ensure that clear ethical guidelines are developed and maintained with regard to the quality of the programme, the providers, confidentiality, support, supervision, training and development.	The teacher must be guided by regulations which govern his/her employment. He/she must also be receptive to the standards developed for persons using counselling skills. He/she must be aware of the limitations of his/her expertise and must be open to support, supervision, training and development.	The Principal has overall responsibility and accountability for services provided by his/her school. S/he must carefully monitor situations to ensure that professionalism and ethics are observed. She must be knowledgeable about the ethical standards that govern counsellors and teachers.	The recruitment and selection processes must be carefully monitored by the Ministry to ensure that the right people are placed in the right positions. The Ministry must have monitoring and evaluating processes in place. It must ensure that persons are adequately trained so that they know the standards that govern their performance.
Roles and Responsibilities	The guidance counsellor is the specialist in counselling within the school system. She must also provide supervision, training and support for others using counselling skills.	A classroom teacher who receives training in counselling skills should be aware that he is not a counsellor. He must consult with the counsellor for assistance with referrals and identification of problems, in order to ensure that students are able to cope with their academic challenges. She can assist with career counselling.	Ensure that the counsellor's specialist role is protected and that teachers understand what is expected of them.	Ensure that there are enough qualified counsellors in the system.

PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS cont'd

ISSUES	COUNSELLOR'S ROLE	TEACHER'S ROLE	PRINCIPAL/ SCHOOL'S ROLE	MINISTRY'S ROLE
Qualifications and Professional Development	Be aware of the academic qualification and personal qualities which are ideally required for their employment. They should use their initiative to develop a personal development programme and seek out training opportunities locally, regionally and internationally.	Teachers who are interested in becoming guidance counsellors should be cognizant of these requirements. Teachers Unions should lobby for the ongoing training of counsellors.	Lobby for effective recruitment and selection practices and for ongoing the training and evaluation of counsellors.	Ministries of Education should adopt these criteria, in principle, as long term goals for their hiring and training process.
Multidisciplinary Approach	Coordinate guidance services within the school and with other professionals.	Make themselves available for consultation whenever necessary. Due to their daily interactions with students, teachers are well poised to notify counsellors of cases when the interventions of other specialists might be needed.	Help counsellor identify sources for referral	The Education Officer responsible for counselling services should convene meetings of counsellors to work out guidelines for a referral system that can be adopted and various schools on the island.

PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS cont'd

ISSUES	COUNSELLOR'S ROLE	TEACHER'S ROLE	PRINCIPAL/ SCHOOL'S ROLE	MINISTRY'S ROLE
Rights	Ensure that they are knowledgeable about the rights related to the counselling relationship. Counsellors should inform teachers, parents and children of their rights.	Know their rights and the rights of children and respect their rights.	Responsible for ensuring that the rights of everyone are protected.	Responsible for the development and ratification of legislation related to the rights of the individual.
Supervision and Accountability	Counsellors are responsible for the supervision of teachers.	Ensure that they receive the training support and supervision necessary to do a good job.		
Referrals	Counsellors are responsible for setting up and guiding the referral process.	Follow guidelines which have been set up for referrals.	Oversee the referral process and make themselves available for consultation.	

CHAPTER FOUR: ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGERIAL GUIDELINES

There is increasing recognition of the vital role that counsellors play in the educational process. However, this recognition does not always translate into the provision of adequate space and time for the counselling process. The lack of technical support, materials and space for record storage, can have a negative impact on the counsellor's effectiveness.

Gysbers et al., in *School Board Policies for Guidance and Counselling: A Call to Action* (2000), note that:

“Research has shown that when school counsellors have the time, resources, and the structure of comprehensive guidance programs to work in, they contribute to positive student academic and career development and the development of safe learning climates in our schools” (p.352).

This observation corroborates the three objectives of the Logic Model. In an earlier article Gysbers et al. (1999) give examples of non-guidance tasks which “take time away from the preferred tasks” of the counsellor. Examples of non-guidance tasks were said to include, but were not limited to clerical duties and paperwork, records management, master schedule building, supervision duties, special education case management and assessment work and substitute teaching.

Bovair & McLaughlin (1994) summarize the major management issues related to counselling as:

- A need to clarify the purposes of counselling and guidance, acknowledging the different purposes and different levels of work;
- A need to evaluate that provision, including the student voice in that process;
- A need to draw up and communicate policy in this area.

A study of the arrows which point to the linkages between the stakeholders and the five categories of activities in the Logic Model, illustrates clearly that all stakeholders are seen as important contributors to planning, acquiring resources, marketing and evaluation activities.

4.1 Physical Space Allocation

Counsellors should have a specific area that is easily accessible to students, and ensures the privacy and confidentiality of the sessions.

Best Practice: All newly built schools should have a counselling area. Older schools should make arrangements to place the counsellor in favourable circumstances. The counselling area should have a waiting area with print, video and audio resource materials, and a counselling room. Ideally the area should have a direct telephone line.

In schools where space is in short supply creative and innovative measures should be devised. Such options could include a lunch time service when an empty classroom may be used, or an after-school programme.

4.2 Time Allocation and Time Tabling

Counselling must be recognized as an integral part of the education system. As such it should form a part of the regular curriculum in every school. It should not be seen as a crisis intervention service. The counsellors should be recognized for their role in counselling and should be clearly distinguished from classroom teachers.

Counsellors therefore should not be required to perform non-guidance tasks that prevent them from devoting time to their counselling and guidance responsibilities. Research has shown that this decreases their potential effectiveness in the school system (Gysbers, 1999). Examples of non-guidance tasks are listed under the introduction to Section 4.

Best Practice: Group sessions are time tabled; the guidance and counselling service should be visible. In Gysbers' (1999) analysis of guidance services counsellors reported that they were more visible when they were conducting more classroom activities and spending more time with students.

Best Practice: The possibility of sharing time between HFLE and guidance on the school timetable should be explored. In addition, teachers should be educated in conflict mediation skills. Also, principals should be involved in planning times and visits of the counselling assistants. (Input from Grenada dissemination).

Best Practice: It was suggested that counsellors should circulate a timetable of the work they do in order to eradicate the impression that their time is underutilized. In this regard it was recommended that counsellors should record their schedule for their home visits, counselling sessions, and workshops. It was felt that if the principal and teachers were educated about the role of the guidance counsellor this would increase their understanding, acceptance and tolerance of the profession (St. Kitts and Nevis).

4.3 Secretarial Support

Ideally, counsellors should have access to confidential secretarial support. Counsellors should also have access to direct telephone services. This ideal is not usually possible in our school systems as yet. Therefore, in schools, with a secretary on staff, the importance of confidentiality should be emphasized. Clear consequences should be specified for any breaches of this confidentiality. If there is no secretary, the counsellor should endeavour to ensure that telephone conversations are received in as private a place as possible so as to reduce the likelihood of eavesdropping. Typing of reports and evaluations also require confidential services. If no secretary is available at the school, the counsellor should have access to such services through the Ministry of Education.

4.4 Record-Keeping

Record-keeping is essential for referrals and for the careful monitoring and evaluation of students' progress and for the referral process. Record-keeping should be done in a timely and confidential manner. Appropriate filing space should be allocated for this purpose.

The principal, with the assistance of the school secretary where one exists, should be responsible for the storage of the students' general files. The counsellor should be responsible for students' confidential reports, and her or his own counselling records. The counsellor should keep her or his personal case notes separate from the daily log recordings of client sessions. A profile should be developed for each student and standardized entry forms should be developed.

4.5 Financial and Material Support

School budgets should allocate finances for the procurement of resource materials for general use and for workshops and other contingencies. However, counsellors should not rely solely on the education budget to support their programmes. Innovative ways should be devised to procure additional funds for conducting workshops, and for the purchase of other resources including audio-visual and print materials. Past-pupils' Associations and other voluntary groups may be asked to contribute to the counselling service. Also School adoption programmes have proven successful.

Optimally counselling rooms should be equipped with:

- Training videos, cassettes and CDs;
- Cassettes and videos for use with students;
- Books, Internet access, computer;
- Television and VCR, radio cassette and CD player;
- Cushions, furniture
- Toys, teddy bears

If it is not possible to obtain this equipment at the present time, counsellors should ensure that, at the very minimum, they have a CD player and a radio cassette player, some books, cassettes and CD's. A minimal budget of about three thousand dollars is a start towards achieving this goal. However, individual countries should feel free to determine their basic start-up costs.

6 Evaluation and Monitoring

The success of a programme depends on regular evaluation and monitoring. The counselling programme should be evaluated at least once every five years to ensure that it is meeting the identified needs of its constituents and is responding to their emerging and changing needs. All the stakeholders - students, parents, teachers and counsellors - should be involved in the evaluation, using formal and informal methods. They should help to develop the evaluation criteria for teachers, counsellors and the programmes. Self evaluation should be part of the

process. There should be ongoing formal professional training for the appraiser and the appraisee. Appraisals of the counsellor's performance should be conducted by the Education Department. Clear guidelines should be established to determine who would perform the appraisal and the on-going supervision.

A Proposal for School Counselling Programme in St Lucia prepared by Arthusa Semei (unpublished document) recommended that evaluation of the programme should be used to determine:

1. *“the effectiveness of the programme and the methodology used in meeting the stated goals and objectives.*
2. *how well the programme is responding to the changing needs of students.”*
(p 16).

Semei further recommended that the entire support services delivery system should be evaluated. This network would include teachers, principals, district education officers, counsellors, social workers, psychologists, special education staff and any other personnel involved.

A system should be put into place also to conduct appraisals of the counsellor's performance and the effectiveness of the teacher's use of counselling skills. Counsellors should help to devise the evaluation criteria. This evaluation should be conducted by the Ministry of Education. According to Heron (1990) an assessment of valid intervention should indicate whether

- it is in the right category;*
- it is the right sort of intervention within the category;*
- its content and use of language are fitting;*
- it is delivered in the right manner;*
- it is delivered with good timing;*
- it has the intended results.*

The American School Counselor Association has identified some criteria for the evaluation of counsellors and counselling programmes. These criteria can be found in Appendix Two. Although not applicable in its entirety, this document may be used as a guide.

A case study from the St Lucian context has been presented below. As part of their evaluation process counsellors there have identified stories such as this to indicate that counselling interventions have produced some measure of success

The student was a fifteen-year old Sixth Former at [a Comprehensive] School. Her mother had died suddenly. The father and the oldest brother, who was twenty-two, worked together as joiners/cabinet makers to provide financially. Meanwhile, all the responsibilities of the home had fallen on her shoulder. Her biggest problems were that she made all the critical domestic decisions about food and shopping and that her thirteen-year old younger brother demanded too much of her time. Her problems escalated when her paternal grandmother came to spend some time with them supposedly to offer some support and help but instead made more demands on

her. There was a dramatic drop in her work, although she was an extremely bright student. The student went through the motions of attending classes but had abandoned all school work. Her assignments were mounting on her and she could not seem to find a way around tackling or completing anything.

She became extremely depressed, and did not eat or sleep well and was put on anti-depressants. She came to the attention of the teacher when another student reported that she was planning to commit suicide. She had actually decided that she would obtain a weedicide from her grand father who was a banana farmer.

A systems approach was adopted and it was discovered that none of the family members, including an older sister who lived on her own, had actually dealt with the suddenness of the mother's death, neither were they aware that this sibling was under such enormous pressure.

The school has reported that there has been marked improvement and change in her demeanour and work after three counselling sessions and she no longer wishes to die.

(Status of Counselling in Schools in St Lucia, Unpublished document)

Below is a story from St. Kitts and Nevis attesting to the success of counselling interventions.

In St Kitts and Nevis some parents were concerned about their children's unwillingness to attend school. During the interviews, the children revealed that their peers isolated them. Direct instruction in interpersonal skills combined with opportunities to practise skills in role-play situations and classroom situations led to changes in the ability of the students to relate to their peers. The parents and teachers revealed that they were pleased with the progress of the children.

4.7 Programme Management

The guidance counsellor is the most qualified person to assume the role of management of the guidance and counselling programme in the school. She or he should coordinate the guidance and counselling services in the school and be responsible for collaboration with all stakeholders. There should be on-going consultation with the principal and others involved in pastoral care in the school system.

4.8 Role of the Counsellor in School Management

Guidance and counselling services that incorporate developmental, preventive and remedial activities require the involvement of the entire school. The guidance and counselling programme should complement the academic work of the school and create greater potential for success (See Objective # 1 – Logic Model). The counsellor's input in school management is critical to ensuring that a pastoral care focus continues to infuse all school activities and that a formal guidance and counselling programme is seen as a priority. Essentially, as mentioned earlier, the counsellor seeks to develop a "whole school approach" to guidance and counselling.

The counsellor should be part of the team that develops a Code of ethics for teachers and a discipline policy for the school. In addition to attending PTA meetings and Staff meetings she or he should have regular meetings with the principal to bring him/her up to date on the status of counselling service being offered.

However, the counsellor should seek always to understand the boundaries between school leadership/management and counselling and care should be taken with regard to avoiding the perception that counsellors are “taking sides”.

Nevertheless, counsellors should have some input into school-level decision-making.

4.9 Accessibility of Counsellor to Students

Counsellors should be easily available to students, teachers and parents. This accessibility should include the location of the room and the hours during which the counsellor operates. The counsellor should keep flexible hours. Counsellors should consider carefully the viability of meeting students after school. This option might present other challenges regarding the welfare of children who then have to go home after regular hours.

BEST PRACTICE: One counsellor operates from 9:30a.m.to 4:30 p.m. She has her lunch at 1:00 p.m. so that she is available to students over their lunch hour which is at noon.

Case Study:

Jenny Browne is a school counsellor attached to an All- Girls Secondary School. She has one time-tabled period per week with 3^d, 4th and 5th forms. She does individual counselling with students on a walk-in basis. The counselling room is easily accessible to students. There is very little communication between the counsellor and other members of staff. The counsellor does not participate in staff or P.T.A. meetings of the school even though she is invited. She invites persons to conduct sessions at the school without prior discussion with the principal.

What are some areas of possible conflict?

- feelings of mistrust in terms of staff and principal;
- no collaboration with principal and staff;
- instead of building bridges counsellors may be viewed as the problem.

Possible Solutions :

- Guidelines for operation should be developed by counsellors and administration;
- Counsellors' programme should be made available to staff;
- Greater attempts should be made by the Principal to have her or him involved in an advisory role as necessary.

CHAPTER 4 - ADMINISTRATIVE/MANAGERIAL GUIDELINES

ISSUES	COUNSELLOR'S ROLE	TEACHER'S ROLE	PRINCIPAL/ SCHOOL'S ROLE	MINISTRY'S ROLE
Physical Space Allocation	If space has not been designated for counselling, counsellor should continue to lobby for such space. In the interim she/he should be innovative and flexible.	Cooperate with the counsellor for the creative use of available space.	Assist the counsellor with the flexible scheduling of rooms. She/he should make a strong case for counselling space in new buildings and any additions to existing structures.	Include space for counselling services in future plans for schools.
Time Allocation and Timetabling	Collaborate with principals in the scheduling of their time so that non-guidance tasks do not infringe on guidance and counselling responsibilities.	Do not expect counsellors to act as substitute teachers.	Ensure that time tabling does not interfere with counsellor's responsibilities in guidance and counselling. Guidance counsellors should not be used as substitute teachers.	The Education budget should cater for supply teachers so that guidance counsellors are not expected to substitute.
Secretarial Support	Has responsibility to ensure that telephone conversations are not overheard. Seek out confidential secretarial support for report writing and if not computer literate, make that your goal.	Offer secretarial support if they are computer literate.	Ensure that the counsellor has privacy for confidential telephone conversations, even if it necessitates sharing his/her office. Seek out computer support for the school, if one is not available on the premises.	Secretaries assigned to schools should be carefully chosen as confidentiality is important. Ensure that counsellors have access to confidential secretarial services or have access to a computer at the Ministry or at another school.
Record Keeping	Ensure that students' confidential reports and personal notes are stored carefully. Keep personal notes separate from other counselling records.	Be responsible for student's general files in collaboration with secretary, if one exists. Ensure that general records are up to date.	Ensure that adequate and appropriate storage space is made available	

ADMININISTRATIVE/MANAGERIAL GUIDELINES cont'd

ISSUES	COUNSELLOR'S ROLE	TEACHER'S ROLE	SCHOOL'S ROLE	MINISTRY'S ROLE
Financial and Material Support	Use innovative ways to get material for counselling services. Solicit community assistance; Present list of resources needed to Principal, Ministry and community partners.	Help counsellors access material support.	Ensure that budget presented to Ministry includes allocation for material for counselling and developmental workshops.	Make budgetary allocations for the procurement of material for guidance and counselling services and training.
Evaluation and Monitoring	Help to develop evaluation criteria; Perform self evaluation, teacher evaluation and programme evaluation.	Evaluate them for doing the above. Rate effectiveness of training and general services.	Overall responsibility for evaluation and monitoring within the school.	Make provision for the development of evaluation and monitoring criteria and a system
Programme Management	Responsible for managing the guidance and counselling services and collaborating with others.	Assist guidance counsellor when needed.	Be available for ongoing consultation.	
Role of Counsellor in School Management	Help to develop whole school guidance approach. Make input into the formulation of a Code of Ethics for teacher and a Discipline Policy for children.		Involve counsellor in decision making.	
Accessibility of Counsellor to Students	Use innovative means to ensure accessibility i.e have lunch hour, break time, and after school meetings	Help counsellor be more accessible	Lobby for more counselling space; Help counsellor to maximize the use of available space and time.	Include counselling rooms in the plans for new schools.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUPPORT SERVICES SYSTEM

Counselling services do not exist in a vacuum. A holistic approach to counselling involves the collaboration and coordination of services with other agencies and individuals and the utilization of community resources. The counsellor must exercise his or her best judgement in order to determine when the client's needs require referrals to others, and when collaboration and consultation with others are necessary. Ultimately the child-centred view of behaviour requires engaging with the varied contexts in which the child functions: the classroom, the school, the family, and the community. By forging partnerships with these critical agents of socialization the counsellor can work towards a convergence of interventions.

Our Logic Model identifies the multifaceted nature of the human resources who are needed to make inputs into a successful system. However, one must not minimize the impact of a strong internal support system in the school. This support enhances the institution's ability to initiate partnerships with external agencies.

5.1 Liaising with Other Agencies

A holistic approach to guidance and counselling services requires the coordinated efforts of a multi-disciplinary team (See Section 3.4). The counsellor's role as coordinator of guidance and counselling services places upon him or her the responsibility to be knowledgeable about the services that are available in the community. With regard to community agencies, the counsellor must have a clear profile of companies or organizations and must be cognizant among other things about the names of the contact persons, the quality of services available, the procedures for accepting referrals, the services that are provided, the hours of work, the location and contact numbers, and their professional reputation.

5.2 Referrals to Other Agencies

It is the responsibility of the counsellor to ensure that a referral source used by the school or parent, with her or his recommendation, is competent, and capable of responsibly delivering the services required in a professional manner.

There is need for establishing informal as well as formal linkages with regard to referrals. A referral has a cost attached. Ministries of Education would be advised to consider reaching some arrangement with other agencies. For example, private counsellors may be retained. On the other hand, a subvention may be managed by the Guidance and Counselling Unit to obtain expert referral services when necessary.

5.3 Collaboration and Sharing of Resources

In the Eastern Caribbean counselling resources - human, technical, instructional and community based - are in short supply. It is therefore important to collaborate and share resources in order to avoid duplication and wastage. The counsellor's role as the liaison

between the school and community for counselling services places him or her in a special position to initiate ways of collaboration. As noted in Section 5.1, it is the counsellor's responsibility to know what services and expertise are available and then to determine the best fit between the service and the needs of students.

Best Practice:

Melena Fontaine, Education Officer in the Ministry of Education, Dominica, has presented a report on a Parenting Programme which represents a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the Grand Bay Secondary School. The programme included topics such as:

- **Understanding your child – The Adolescent**
- **Helping your child at home – Reading Strategies**
- **Understanding your child – Communication**
- **Helping your child at home – General Strategies**
- **Dealing with learning difficulties**
- **Child abuse – Prevention**
- **Discipline and Reinforcement –Building self esteem**
- **Discipline and Reinforcement – Conflict Resolution**
- **Parent-child dialogue**
- **Child abuse – recognition**
- **Working with the school**

Facilitators of the programme included a principal, a special education officer, a counsellor, a learning support advisor, a special education teacher, an HFLE teacher, and parenting and curriculum experts from the OECS Education Reform Unit based in St Lucia.

Case Studies:

- a. **Parent S, at the beginning of the programme shared the **behaviour** of her child with the participants. According to her, her son never had homework and was always going to the library every afternoon, returning home at about 7:00 p m. She was at her wit's end in trying to resolving the problem. She noted that he was not performing well at school. During the mid-term review, Parent S, again shared with the participants and said that now with the level of supervision that she gives, her son no longer uses the library as an excuse and is attending to his homework and study and doing better at school.**
- b. **Parent A no longer uses any instrument at hand to beat her child. She practises different methods of discipline.**
- c. **Parent B states, “it has helped me a lot. How to deal with my children in the proper way instead of screaming at them, cursing them, I have learnt to deal with them politely and things are improving.”**

- d. **Parent C states, “I’ve learnt a lot of what I did not know and how to deal with my family at home. It helps me to understand them, because the way I grew up that’s not the way I should grow them up. I use to beat my children whenever they did something wrong. I was more ignorant before.” (Grand Bay Secondary School Parenting Programme, 2000-2001)**

5.4 Consultation with Parents

Consultations with parents may be initiated by parents, the teacher or the counsellor. Regardless of who is the initiator, the teacher or counsellor should take charge of the session to ensure that it maintains its focus and is a positive, hopeful and productive exercise. Parents should be acknowledged for accepting their role in education of their child. Their needs and rights must be respected as well as the rights of their child in the counselling relationship. The following guidelines are suggested:

Before the Consultation

1. *If it is being initiated by the parent, know why he or she is asking for consultation.*
2. *Look at the student’s record. (See 2.2)*
3. *Gather information from teachers, counsellors and/or parents.*
4. *Decide what you hope to accomplish.*
5. *Have a plan for how the consultation will go and some possible suggestions.*

During the Consultation

1. *Structure the meeting*
State the approximate duration, the problem as you know it, and the process. Emphasize that you are working together.
2. *Start with positives.*
Have parent identify some strengths of the student and add some of your own.
3. *Use a logical sequence.*
4. *Gather missing background information.*
5. *Offer suggestions.*
6. *Focus on one or two issues at a time*
7. *Build in encouragement.*
8. *Clarify the plan.*

After the Consultation

1. *Make a plan to follow through on any intervention involving you.*
2. *Contact parents if they do not contact you on the agreed-upon date for follow-up.*

3. *Gather updated information from the teacher or your own notes regarding any observed changes and share them with the parent.*
4. *During follow-up meeting, be prepared to trouble-shoot problems parents might have in implementing plan.*
5. *Set time for second follow-up if needed.*

Source: *Consultation in Schools* by White, J., Mullis, F., Earley, B., and Brigman, G. (1994).

More details on the process during the consultation can be found in Appendices Four and Five.

It is important to win the cooperation of the parent. The parent should be encouraged to tell his/her child that he/she has spoken to a counsellor/teacher. Students should be encouraged to confide in their parents.

5.5 Coordination of Efforts of Other Counselling Agencies

The role of the counsellor as a coordinator of the guidance and counselling programme in the school has been discussed under Section 4.7. This service precludes the duplication of effort. It also allows for the coordinated scheduling of events which reduces the possibilities of events occurring at the same time or in too close proximity for students to derive maximum benefit.

5.6 Counselling Support as Part of a Community Approach

The role of the entire community in nurturing our youth cannot be minimized. PAHO's 1998 report on adolescent health, which was referred to earlier, noted that adolescent's healthy development requires safe and supportive environments, not only in the schools, but also in the homes and in the community. This recommendation has been supported by Caribbean-based and international research.

It is therefore important that the school and the community work together. Partnerships should be formed with the business community, with non-profit organizations, youth organizations and service clubs. These partnerships could lead to joint ventures that enhance the development of students. Individuals in the community can also serve as mentors and valuable resources to share information that can educate as well as motivate the youth. The business community could help to motivate new students as part of the orientation process and could also encourage the development of entrepreneurial skills and an entrepreneurial mind set.

BEST PRACTICE:

College and Career Fairs:

Colleges from the Caribbean, and North America are invited to share their programme with students. Members of the community are invited to share

information on their careers. Students have then been able to gain access to education in these universities. (Anguilla, and St Vincent and the Grenadines)

Summer Job Training Programme:

Fourth, fifth and sixth form students spend several weeks at an office or business place. This has resulted in permanent employment for some students.

Ellen did her summer job experience at the chambers of a local law firm. Upon completion of her secondary education she received permanent employment with the company. (St Lucia and Anguilla)

Mentorship Programme:

This programme which is done in collaboration with the Optimist Club pairs students in need with a mentor. One girl who was placed in a home for delinquent girls bonded well with one of the mentors and turned her life around. She later told her story on radio and to the newspaper encouraging other delinquent youth to follow her example. (Anguilla)

Peer Counselling:

This is a programme which trains students to be counsellors to their own peers.

In St Vincent and the Grenadines a peer counselling programme is being piloted in five schools. Students are initially trained during a one-week training workshop with monthly ongoing one-day workshops. Students are then required, not only to serve as individual support for their peers, but also to facilitate discussions on various social issues affecting teenagers. The students will be organizing debates on issues of importance to students. They are also given the responsibility to assist in making their school violence-free by acting as mediators as well as assisting their peers with conflict resolution strategies.

Motivational Workshops:

These are held annually for fourth and fifth formers. Topics include Study Skills,

Motivation, Self-Esteem, Test-Taking Strategies, Relaxation Techniques, Examination Preparation. These workshops have been very successful and there actually has been an increase in examination results over the years. During this school year workshops have been extended to students of forms 1, 2, and 3.

Resource Library

A counsellor wrote letters to several community businesses requesting their financial assistance in procuring resource material for her guidance and

counselling unit. Her letter included information on the materials she needed and their costs. She followed up the letters with telephone contacts and in some cases personal contacts. She was able to raise several thousand dollars which she used to purchase books, audio material, and video programmes, on a variety of topics for her unit. At present she is using some of the material to conduct Parenting workshops. Members of the community, mainly parents, are asked to view the videos and facilitate the workshops.
(Anguilla)

Radio Programme:

A counsellor has started a radio programme that is aired on every weekday. She prepares the scripts which are read by people from the community. The programme provides information on a wide range of topics geared towards the developmental of healthy lifestyles. (Anguilla)

Parenting Workshops

Parents are invited to view videos from the school's video library. They are then invited to facilitate sessions with other parents. They share the video tape with others while they interpret it and share their own personal experiences. Other parents are invited to share in the discussions. (Anguilla)

Please refer to Section 5.3 for another approach to Parenting Seminars which has been used successfully in Dominica.

Parenting Workshops :

Some additional topics were suggested for Dominica's Parent Workshop, which had been cited in the handbook. These also form part of the Antigua Parenting workshops.

- ❖ Role and Function of the Family**
- ❖ Understanding Stages of Development**
- ❖ Social Skills – conflict resolution, Decision Making etc. (Antigua and Barbuda)**

CHAPTER 5 - SUPPORT SERVICES SYSTEM

ISSUES	COUNSELLOR'S ROLE	TEACHER'S ROLE	SCHOOL'S ROLE	MINISTRY'S ROLE
Liaising with Other Agencies and Making Referrals	Coordinate contacts with other agencies; Know what services are available and determine what is appropriate for each client.	Help counsellor to source other agencies.	Provide assistance whenever possible	
Collaboration and Sharing Resources	Work towards utilizing whatever resources are available for maximum benefit; Help to avoid duplication; Utilize expertise available to help provide services	Be available to assist whenever possible by sharing expertise and other resources.	Create positive climate for sharing and collaboration	
Forming Partnerships with Community	Reach out to community for support to organize programmes; help fund projects; and provide mentoring.			
Consultation with Parents	See gaining cooperation of parents as ultimate goal; Appreciate the rights of parents and the strengths of parents.	Help to establish atmosphere of cooperation	Be supportive of counsellor; Be prepared to give assistance if situation gets out of hand.	

CHAPTER SIX: INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS

SUGGESTED JOURNALS:

American Educational Research Association Journals
American Journal of Guidance and Counselling
Canadian Journal of Counselling
Professional School Counselling Journal
School Psychology Journal

CAREER GUIDANCE BOOKS

Hole in the Fence
MACMILLAN SERIES
Quality Circle Time – Secondary
Primary
Up From Underachievement
101 Ways to Build Self-Esteem

VIDEOS:

Conflict Resolution
Drugs
Vibes in a World of Sexuality

OTHER:

Toys
Puppets
Dolls – Anatomically correct
Posters
Material with information on indigenous industries and jobs

The following material is available from Research Press.com

TEACHERS' RESOURCES

A Primer on rational-emotive therapy	- Windy Dryden
	- Raymone Di Guiseppe
Guiding the process of therapeutic change	- Frederick Kanfer
	- Bruce Scheffe
Relaxation dynamics	- Jonathan C. Smith
Relaxation dynamics Audio Cassette Series	- Jonathan C Smith

DISCIPLINE

Viewpoints: Guide to conflict resolution and decision-making for adolescents - Nancy G. Guerra, Ann Moore, Ronald G. Salby

Child management - Judith M. Smith, Donald E.P. Smith

The Gang intervention handbook - Arnold Goldstein, C. Ronald Huff

The Good Kid book - How to solve the 16 most common behaviour problems - Howard N. Sloane

Aggression replacement training - Arnold Goldstein, Berry Click, John Gibbs

Responsible assertive behaviour - Arnold Lang, Patricia Jakubowski

Reducing resistance - Arnold Goldstein

Writing behavioral contracts - William Derisi, George Butz

First Steps on the ladder to violence - Arnold Goldstein

How to discipline without feeling guilty - Melvin Silberman

Violent times: Discussion guide

Learning to manage anger - Workbook for Teens

Bully Busters A Teacher's Manual - Dawn A. Newman et al

Gangs in School - Arnold P. Goldstein

In Control - Millicent H. Kellner

Help - These Kids Are Driving Me Crazy - Ron Carter

Lasting Change - Arnold P. Goldstein et al

How to Create Positive Relationships with Students - Michelle Kams

The Equip Program - Peer Helping Approach - John Gibbs et al

The Equip Implementation - Granville Potter, John C. Gibbs, Arnold Goldstein

HELP FOR PARENTS:

Teen Pregnancy & Parenting Handbook - Patricia Mathes, Beverly Irby

Raising a Thinking Child Workbook - Myrna B Shure, Theresa Digeronimo

Families - Gerald R. Patterson

Living With Children - Gerald Patterson

Life Lessons for Young Adults - Fred Shrimpf, Sharon Freiburg, David Skadden

A Couples Guide to Communication - John Gott

The Prepare Curriculum - Arnold P. Goldstein

Parents are Teachers - Wesley C. Becker

When Your Child is Difficult - Miles Silberman, Ph. D

Anger Management for Parents Kit

Equipment for Life (Youth Game)

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN THE CLASSROOM

Structuring Your Classroom for Academic Success - Stan Paine

Performance Breakthroughs - Geraldine Markel, Judith Greenbaum

Meeting The ADD Challenge - Steve Gordon, Michael Asher

What Every Teacher Should Know About Students With Special Needs - Roger Pierangelo.
George Guiliani

Developing Emotional Intelligence - Richards J. Bodine

Videos for Parents Series

1. Homework? I'll so it later!
2. I can't decide! What should I do?
3. A change for the better. Teaching Correct behaviour
4. You want ME to help with housework? No Way

5. Catch 'em Being Good. Happier Kids, Happier Parents Through effective praise.
6. No, I won't! And you can't Make Me!
7. Setting your child up for success. Anticipating and preventing Problems
8. I'm Not Everybody! Helping your child stand up to peer pressure
9. Take Time To Be A Family. Holding Successful Family Meetings.
10. It's Great To Be Me! Increasing Your Child's Self-Esteem.

CD's Cerebal Massage Audio

1. The Voyage - A deep Relaxation Program
2. I like to learn & other affirmations for children
3. Brain Bath
4. For my Body with Love
5. Always Special (Self Esteem Program)

Research Press

1. Challenging Kid Assessment and Intervention
2. Learning to Manage Anger. The Rethink Workout for Teens

Attainment's Violent Times Series

1. A time for Healing
2. A time of Grief
3. A time of Rage

IAMFC Distinguished Presenter Series

- ◆ Counseling A Couple Facing Divorce
- ◆ Relationship Enhancement Therapy

ADHD Series

- ◆ Inhibition, time & self-control
- ◆ What can we do?`

CHAPTER SEVEN: GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 PROCESS OF DEVELOPING POLICY

Throughout this document it has been argued that the guidance and counselling programme is an integral part of the school system. Research cited here has also demonstrated that children succeed best in all domains of their lives when counselling is adopted as a whole- school approach, in essence when the school becomes a “guidance community.”(Bovair & McLaughlin, 1994).

The development of policies for guidance and counselling programmes is a process that should therefore involve all the stakeholders (See Logic Model). These include administrators, teachers, school board governors, teachers, students, parents, Special Needs teachers, outside experts, and, of course, counsellors. The counsellor, being the expert in counselling, is a very important member of this team.

Policies for a comprehensive guidance and counselling programme must support the general philosophy of the school. One of the first steps in developing policy therefore is deciding on a working group that is representative of all the stakeholders. It is crucial that everyone involved has an interest in guidance and counselling and appreciates its importance to the system. It is also important to determine whether such a structure already exists in the school or whether one would have to be created. One must identify the general principles under which the group will be operating, the aims of the process and the areas that need further clarification. (See Appendix Six for an example of Starting Up the Process, by McLaughlin, Clark and Chisholm, 1996).

Three cycles of activity have been identified by McLaughlin et al. for the policy-making process. They are based on action research and are as follows:

- Cycle 1 – Raising Awareness
- Cycle 2 – Identifying Needs
- Cycle 3 – Addressing Needs

Within each of these cycles McLaughlin et al. have identified a similar pattern of activity. First, there is discussion in the working group, followed by input from the staff, and input from persons external to the institution. This leads to training exercises that produce feedback which creates the focus for the next cycle of activity. The cycles can then begin again at a different level. This spiralling effect drives the process forward.

The first cycle, the Raising Awareness cycle, allows staff and others to raise their concerns. This might include concerns about legal issues, support issues, and concerns about confidentiality. Initial training sessions are conducted. The aim of the training sessions is to inform and guide staff. It also empowers them as their self-confidence is increased. Resource material should be prepared for the training sessions. Staff feedback

at this level may be about work overload or feelings of insecurity with using counselling skills.

The second cycle provides an opportunity to identify the needs that have been brought out through the concerns raised in Cycle One. Staff will begin to make suggestions about areas for training and further clarification. As training needs are more clearly identified, priorities should be determined and the training process continues. The feedback becomes more specific and more complex.

It is during the third cycle of activity that some of the major concerns can be addressed and policy formulation may begin on specific areas of concern. The management of feedback is now more challenging as more people are putting forward their own ideas. In order to address concerns in particular areas feedback must now be more specific and focused. For example, if the issue is one of referral, which would have been addressed earlier, is raised again, case studies could be used to generate more discussion that could clarify certain concerns and improve the system.

There is no timetable for the completion of the different cycles. After the first level has been completed the cycles begin at a more focused level, for example, developing a policy of Referral Procedures.

This process is being used successfully in some countries for the development of educational policies. It has been used in Anguilla for the development of education policies after the Education Act had been written. The development of the Act itself also involved some consultation with stakeholders. However, it was the development of policies that had greater participation. The process was a lengthy one, and ensured that teachers, parents, and the community were able to develop a sense of ownership of the outcome. The process was quite successful. There was no major difficulty. One participant remembers that the exercise was a good learning experience. A consultant guided them through the process which took several months and required a lot of writing and rewriting. Even now, some years later, some issues are still being addressed.

7.2 POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

Many factors may have an impact on the success of the process of policy development. These include but are not limited to:

- Teacher ownership of the process;
- The commitment of the working group;
- The value attached to feedback and how it is used;
- The support of the principal;
- Assistance from external sources including experts;
- The presence of a coordinator/facilitator who will drive the process;
- The flexibility of the process;
- The confidence of staff;
- The lack of definitive answers;
- The unease of staff;

- The creation of experts vis-à-vis the development of all;
- The ability to keep focused;
- Resistance to change;
- The expectations of the target groups;
- Continuity established as the role of the working group changes.

To address these factors which could determine the success of the process, it is important to ensure that everyone feels that he or she is vital to the process. This means that everyone is provided with an opportunity to give feedback. It also means that the consultation process is ongoing. There should be consultation before any decision is reached or any guidelines are introduced. Provision should be made for information, guidance and training. The process should not be rushed. People should go at their own pace to allow them to assimilate ideas as they emerge. The end product should be seen as relevant and should be understood and supported by all (McLaughlin, Clark and Chisholm, 1996).

7.3 THE WAY FORWARD

Counsellors in the various OECS countries should come together to review this handbook. Education administrators, including principals and Education Officers, should also have access to copies of the Handbook.

The time has come for all persons involved in counselling to form a Counsellors' Association within each country. The Association should request an audience with the Ministry officials. At that time they should discuss key points in the Handbook. Counsellors should lobby for the formulation of legislation on licensing procedures. Counsellors should also lobby for budgetary allocations for the training of counsellors and teachers and for ongoing developmental work. Counsellors should then share this information with teachers in their various countries. This could be done at a special meeting of the Teachers' Union. Counsellors should also hold discussions with their principals regarding implementation at their schools.

Public Awareness Campaigns should be conducted on the various OECS countries. The targeted groups should be parents and children. The print, audio and video media should be used to get the message across.

The counsellors of the OECS should organize themselves into a Counselling Association which has representation from all nine countries. This broad representation will tend to ensure that current issues may be addressed, support networks established; as well, some training and development needs may be addressed on a regional level.

APPENDIX ONE

THE ROLE OF THE COUNSELLOR

OTHER PERSONS AS RESOURCES


The Role of the School Counsellor

LEVEL ONE	LEVEL TWO	LEVEL THREE
Counselling	Counselling, collaborating	Counselling, collaborating, co-ordinating
<p>Developing strategies for meeting the needs of students experiencing difficulties</p> <p>Developing intervention strategies with other resource persons - social workers, mental health specialist, psychologist, for dealing with referrals</p> <p>*Providing counselling to students</p> <p>Developing a profiling system for all students</p> <p>Informing parents, teachers and students about the existence of standardized tests and their interpretation</p>	<p>Promoting awareness and positive attitudes towards the counselling programme in schools and community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving parents information about educational opportunities, the counselling programme and the expectations of the school <p>Providing informed educational and career planning for all students</p> <p>Developing a team approach to guidance and counselling services</p> <p>Developing a network of community referral agencies to provide services which can be best provided by other agencies</p>	<p>* Developing a competency based guidance and counselling programme focusing on learning, personal, social and career/vocational needs</p> <p>* Coordinating programmes that use school/community partnerships to create an awareness of the world of work and develop a portfolio of career needs with the help of the private sector</p> <p>Developing a mentoring programme with the support of the public and private sectors.</p> <p>Continuing to refine and improve the counselling programme to meet the needs of students</p>


* Indicates what already exists to some extent.

Other Persons As Resources


In addition to counsellors, other individuals will play an important role in the guidance of students as resources and as main deliverers. These include District Education Officers, Principals, Special Education Teachers, Social Workers, Director of Curriculum, the private sector and parents. Other persons will be involved in the programme as it becomes more comprehensive.

	LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III
	Supportive	Participate	Independent
District Education Officer	Understand the guidance needs of school populations	Works with the counsellors, staff and community to secure support for programme	Views all school personnel as having a part to play in an articulated developmental guidance programme Provide support for an active, ongoing guidance programme Requires accountability and evaluation of the progress towards goals, objectives, programme
Principal	* Establish a positive climate for implementing the guidance programme Identifies staff members who will liaise and assist counsellors *Supports a public relations programme that will emphasize guidance as an integral part of the total school programme	Works closely with the counsellors to implement and evaluate the programme Uses the guidance staff to plan in-service, evaluation, or assessment of guidance programme	Encourages staff members to upgrade skills and knowledge for implementing guidance programme Assume responsibility re: guidance programme


LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III
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	Supportive	Participate	Independent
		<p>Encourages parents, community members, and business and industry representatives to participate in the educational system</p> <p>Assures that the guidance programme staff is relieved of excessive teaching loads and non-developmental guidance duties</p>	<p>Encourages staff to assume a managerial role to facilitate the establishment of a developmental guidance programme</p> <p>Monitors programme effectively</p>
Director of Curriculum	<p>Encourages developmental guidance awareness through curriculum</p> <p>Provide CEO, PS and DEOs with information on funding, personnel, programme and evaluation needs</p> <p>Promotes professional growth of all guidance personnel</p>	<p>Facilitates programme implementation</p> <p>Establishes a systematic approach to making guidance available from K-12</p> <p>Seeks and maintains cooperative working relationships with all personnel whose roles and responsibilities affect the development and implementation of the guidance programme</p> <p>Provides leadership for development of appropriate implementation plans</p>	<p>Works with guidance staff to plan, implement and evaluate</p> <p>Ensures the establishment of structures within the school for programme effectiveness.</p> <p>Works with teachers, parents, community, other relevant personnel and supervisory staff to plan and develop the whole school guidance curriculum</p> <p>Assigns staff and co-ordinates all curricular guidance activities</p>

LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III
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	Supportive	Participate	Independent
		Coordinates regular, planned meetings where counsellors share information, consult on specific problems, and develop and refine system-wide programmes	Promotes a comprehensive, pupil services model delivery system
Psychologist Social worker School Nurse	Co-ordinate referrals to other service providers Communicate regularly on district/pupil service programmes	Work with the guidance staff to provide information to school/community about at-risk students and assist with programming designed to reduce those risks Utilize a comprehensive pupil services team approach to coordinating programmes and services for students in crisis	Are involved in planning, implementing and evaluating so that all students receive systematic guidance based on learning, personal/social and career/vocational needs
* Special Education Staff	Coordinate the assessment of students for possible placement in special programmes Coordinates response to career guidance needs of students with counsellor	Coordinate the development of individualized education programmes to include guidance	Work cooperatively with the guidance staff to provide information and suggest management strategies that the regular classroom teachers can use with students with learning difficulties

LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III
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	Supportive	Participate	Independent
Teachers	Refer students to counsellor for assistance Create positive, interactive relationships with students and provide a primary basis for intellectual, social and emotional growth	Request assistance from counsellor to plan and implement activities in academic and vocational curricula Participate in guidance programming, i.e., as co-facilitators of groups, in advisor/advisee	Recognise the value of developmental guidance Use subject areas to assist students in developing personal/social, career, and learning competencies Work as team members to plan and implement

		programmes, as primary instructors in some areas and to support students in crisis	guidance activities essential to the overall development of students
Business and Industry Represent-atives	Provide speakers, field trip opportunities and school demonstrations to increase student knowledge of the working world in their community	Provide information and opportunities for students to participate in co-op programmes, job-shadowing and work experience Encourage and participate in student organizations, e.g., Junior Achievements	Provide up-to-date labour market information, co-op and apprenticeship sites, and mentorship for all students
Parents	Provide support for children through participation in parent conferences, school activities and volunteerism	Participate in school curricular, extracurricular, and guidance activities serving their children	Participate on the guidance committee that will facilitate implementation

LEVEL I	LEVEL II	LEVEL III
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	Supportive	Participate	Independent
	Work with teachers and counsellors to support their children's learning, personal/social and career/vocational growth	Support guidance as an important part of education	*Serve as mentors and models for classes (daddy, big brother, big sister)
Community Service Agencies	Establish communication and referral channels Example: social services police, Health Clinics, Family Court, etc.	Provide information services available to students and families	Participate in planning and implementing a guidance programme that includes services and activities provided by the community agencies

* Indicates what already exists to some extent.

SOURCE???

APPENDIX TWO

STANDARDS FOR GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAMS OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

The American School Counselor Association has prescribed the elements of a comprehensive, and developmental guidance and counseling program and has identified the criteria upon which the competencies and responsibilities of qualified differentiated staff members should be evaluated.

In the design for operation, through the curriculum and through specialized approaches, the guidance and counseling program exists to improve the learning environment by involving students, staff, parents, the community and others served by the program.

Through individual and group contacts, the counselor has a major role in helping all persons to develop more adequate and realistic concepts of themselves, to become aware of educational and occupational opportunities and to integrate this understanding of self with opportunities to make informed decisions.

The standards as set forth by the American School Counselor Association allow local school districts, institutions, agencies and others to design and implement guidance and counseling programs consistent with the unique needs of students within each setting. The following are characteristics of a good guidance and counseling program:

1. There is a written statement of objectives developed as a counselor responsibility, and with the involvement of appropriate staff, specifying the overall program as it involves and relates to the needs of the person in the school, institution, agency and community.
2. The basic program involves the process of consulting and coordinating services. The program is comprehensive and developmental and is implemented through the curriculum and through specialized approaches. Orientation, information, appraisal, placement, follow-up, follow-through, referral and research activities are included.
3. There is evidence that persons throughout the school, institution, agency and community have continuous opportunity to participate.
4. There is evidence that the program is systematically planned, implemented and evaluated.
5. The program is continued on an extended basis during periods when classes are not in session.

6. The program is community credited, serving not only students enrolled but also pre-schoolers, dropouts, graduates and other community citizens.
7. Counsellor taught or initiated mini-courses in decision-making, value clarification, study skills, and/or similar units are offered.
8. The program includes other innovative services and activities which are designed to meet unique needs of persons.

The American School Counselor Association holds the position that appropriate skilled staff be employed to implement a guidance and counseling program designed to meet the needs of persons to be served by the program.

APPENDIX THREE

SAMPLE REFERRAL

Student's name.....

Grade.....Referring Teacher.....

Date of Referral.....

1. Reason for Referral.....

.....

.....

2. What action has been taken?.....

.....

.....

3. What specific help do you feel is needed?.....

.....

.....

4. When can we meet?.....

.....

.....

APPENDIX FOUR

CONSULTATION GUIDELINES

Before the Consultation;

1. If it is being initiated by the parent, know why he/she is asking for consultation
2. Look at the student's record
3. Gather information from teachers, counsellors and/or parents
4. Decide what you hope to accomplish
5. Have a plan for how the consultation will go and some possible suggestions.

During the Consultation

1. *Structure the meeting.* "We'll have approximately forty minutes for our meeting. As I understand it the problem is _____. What I thought would be helpful is that together we get clear on what the problem involves and what is causing it or keeping it going. Then we will be able to put our heads together and develop an action plan to help you achieve your goals. Does that sound OK?"
2. *Start with positives.* "Have parent identify some strengths of the student being discussed. It is helpful for the counsellor to add some positives from the information gathered from the student's record, teachers, and contact with the student.
3. *Use a logical sequence.*
 - a. What is your main concern? (problem)
 - b. What happens just before the problem behaviour?
 - c. Then what happens?
 - d. When he or she does that, what are you feeling?
 - e. Then what do you do?
 - f. What is the child's reaction to what you do?
 - g. What changes would you expect to see if things begin to get better? (goal)
 - h. How long has this been a problem? How frequently does the problem occur?
 - i. What have you tried?
 - j. What was the child's reaction?
 - k. What else have you tried? How did the child react? (recycle)
 - l. What do you think might work? (recycle)

4. *Gather missing background information.*
 - a. Siblings (names and ages) and how they do academically, socially, athletically; whether they are responsible and helpful.
 - b. How student does in the same categories as above. (Ask about student's opportunity for play with peers in neighbourhood, at school, activities.)
 - c. How student gets along with siblings, mother, father, other significant adults at home, teachers.
 - d. How a typical day goes: getting up, dressing, breakfast, afternoon after school, dinner, homework, bedtime.
5. *Offer suggestions.* After summarizing the problem offer several suggestions and give parent a choice: "Which do you think would be most helpful to you?" Put the parent in the role of the expert.
6. *Focus on one or two issues at a time.* Avoid overwhelming the parent. Develop a plan that's clear and possible.
7. *Build in encouragement.* Be encouraging to the parent, and build in encouragement to the child as part of the action plan.
8. *Clarify the plan.* Get a commitment and starting time for agreed-upon action plan. Summarize the plan and set a time for follow-up contact.

After the Consultation

1. Make a plan to follow through on any intervention involving you.
2. Contact parents if they do not contact you on the agreed-upon date for follow-up.
3. Gather updated information from the teacher or your own notes regarding any observed changes and share them with the parent.
4. During follow-up meeting, be prepared to trouble shoot problems parents in implementing plan. Encourage parent for any effort. Modify plan, with parent input, as needed.
5. Set time for second follow-up if needed.

Many counsellors find it useful to record key points of a consultation and give a copy of that record to the parent. If you take notes on the "Parent-Teacher Consultation Record Form" or some other form, explain its purpose and let the parent know he or she will receive a copy.

Source: *Consultation in Schools* by JoAnna White, Fran Mullis, Barbara Earley, Greg Brigman

APPENDIX FIVE

PARENT-TEACHER CONSULTATION RECORD FORM

Parent or Teacher _____

Student _____ Grade _____

Problem/Concern:

Background Information:

- Strengths
- Standardized test score results, grades, attendance.
- Other

Summary of Consultation:

- What has been tried?
- Action Plan:
- Follow up: Who What When

Source: *Consultation in Schools* by JoAnna White, Fran Mullis, Barbara Earley, Greg Brigman, 1994

APPENDIX SIX

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STARTING UP THE PROCESS

The following points need to be considered:

Establishing

- Existing structures in school. Are they suitable? So you need a separate group? If so, how will it relate to existing structures in the school?
- Representation of interests. Which ones? Do members have a variety of interests and do they wear more than one hat? (The latter is essential if the group is to be small but representative.)
- The size of the group. How many members do you wish to have ? (8-10 seems to be a reasonable size.)

Identifying

- What are you trying to achieve in broad terms?
- How do you propose to do carry out the work? Do you need to inform, guide or train?
- What do you need to help you, e.g. INSET?
- Which target group is the work aimed at (staff, students, parents, board of governors)?
- Do you have support from within school for the work? (The principal's support is particularly important.)

Outside Experts

Explore the possibilities in your own area. They are very important as a source of advice, support and may even help with training.

Source: *Counselling and guidance in schools -Developing policy and practice:*
Colleen McLaughlin, Pam Clark and Meryl Chisholm, 1996.

The following is a proposed implementation plan produced by workshop participants in St. Kitts and Nevis.

Proposals for the Way Forward:

The group made some concrete plans for taking the process forward following the workshop deliberations.

1. *Appoint spokespersons:*
 A committee consisting of six persons was named. They were
 Mrs M Blake Mr B Patterson
 Mrs G Mills Ms J Flanders Dyer
 Dr P Prince Ms R Thomas

2. *Set up functional communication system for the sharing of resources, ideas and for networking support:*

 To this end E-mail addresses and telephone numbers were exchanged. The plan was to create a Listserve group.

3. *Draft proposals.*

 The proposals to be drafted are in the following areas:
 Legislation
 Code of Ethics
 Counsellors handbook appendices on:
 Practical tools
 Assessment Tools
 Training: Accreditation/ Licensing/Qualifications

4. *Enhance Professional Development*

 Organize Retreats and Seminars

5. *Create Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships:*

 Donor/funding Agencies
 Support Services
 Community Agencies

The group's first task was to determine a timeline for the follow-up activities.

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