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Benefits of counseling services for elementary school students

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to identify how elementary school counseling services benefits students, academically and emotionally. The interest in this study was a yearning to gain deeper insight into elementary school counseling and how their services impacts students. Through research and field study it has proven that elementary school counseling has been beneficial for young students. Understanding the role of the elementary school counselor is vital to comprehend the services school counselors provide. The collaboration counselors have with teachers, administration, parents and most importantly, the students, reflect how beneficial the counseling sessions are and the conflicts that may arise.

Introduction

Elementary school counselors have played an important role in the elementary school system(s). Elementary school counselors are seen as mediator, reformer, friend and role model for young students. My research will focus primarily on elementary school counselors and the positive role they play in young students, academically and emotionally. The purpose of this study was to gain insight on elementary school counseling and how it benefits young students. Elementary school counselors are an important figure throughout young students life. Elementary school students are excelling emotionally and academically because of the phenomenal counseling services they are receiving. Elementary school counselors are changing students' lives and the dynamic of schools.

Literature Review

What is counseling? Counseling services include assistance, guidance in resolving social, emotional and academic conflict(s). A professional proctors counseling services. There are various types of counseling, such as: Family and marriage, Educational, rehab, mental health and substance abuse counseling. When did school counseling begin? There were two periods, which brought an increase in counseling, especially elementary school, counseling.

Much of the innovation that occurred in school counseling took place during two periods. The first followed the launching of the Soviet satellite Sputnik during the late 1950s, at which time the U.S. government channeled millions of dollars into the preparation of secondary school counselors, ostensibly to help in the search for new talent among high school students to beat the Soviets in the space race. This boom period in the preparation

of secondary school counselors continued through much of the 1960s (Gerler, E. R., Jr. 1995).

The beginning of counseling derived from the heavily competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. It was imperative for U.S. schools to hire school counselors and obtain talented individuals' to defeat the communists. The influx of elementary school counselors began in the late 1960's and early 1970's when the U.S. hired more elementary school counselors. Therefore, "Universities rapidly got into the business of preparing elementary school counselors, and a variety of exciting new programs were tried to help promote emotional and social growth among children in our nation's elementary schools" (Gerler, E. R., Jr. 1995). Thus begun the reign of elementary school counselors in the United States.

In the mid-1960 after the Elementary & Secondary Act of 1965 passed, this placed more emphasis on school accountability, which resulted in the increase of elementary school counseling. By 1971, there were less than 8,000 elementary school counselors in the United States (Schmidt, Lanier, Cope, 1999). At this time, elementary school counseling was seen as pivotal to the success of schooling and students. It was at this time where the awareness of school counseling was spread throughout the U.S. In 1990-1991 academic years, 12 U.S. states authorized elementary school counseling (Schmidt, Lanier, Cope, 1999). This began the era of elementary school counseling in the United States. However, "Throughout this period of professional growth, the Elementary School Guidance and Counseling journal was a leading resource for practicing school counselors and counselor educators who taught in graduate preparation programs" (Schmidt, Lanier, Cope, 1999). School counselors began creating methods and theories they would use in their counseling services. Journaling and reflection was an effective way to record their experiences and interventions and methods. This mechanism

would help elementary school counselors for the future as well as provide a basis for professors who taught grad school. The change in elementary school counselors did not take place until the “21st century ushered in the No Child Left Behind (2001) with it’s main goal of closing the achievement gap between minority and disadvantage youth and their peers. This focus shifted from ‘input’ to ‘outcome’, rendering all school personnel responsible for student achievement” (Perkins, 2010). This shifted the role of the school counselor. It shifted the paradigm of school counseling. It put more emphasis on academics, rather than solely on mental health. School counseling services would be responsible for benefiting students academically and emotionally. Learning the history of elementary counseling connects us to what events took place in order for schools to incorporate the counseling services for their students. Comprehending the role of an elementary school counselor is salient.

What is an elementary school counselor? Do not mistake elementary school counselors for a typical “guidance” or “academic” counselor, which are often seen in Middle and High school. “The functions of elementary school counselors are not replicas of secondary school counselor functions, according to Morse and Russell (1998). Rather, they are appropriate to the developmental stages and unique characteristics of elementary school students and the elementary school setting” (Coll, K, Freeman, B, 1997). Elementary school counselors foster services that are beneficial and appropriate at the elementary school level. They are helping students create their purpose, potential, confidence and high self-esteem. Students are learning to deal with learning or emotional challenges and overcoming social conflicts, like peer pressure or bullying (Coll, K., Freeman, B., 1997). Elementary school counselors play a vital role in young students lives, academically and emotionally. They are guiding elementary school students to cope with conflict, whether at home or in school and watch them grow and succeed. In contrast

to elementary school counselors, middle school and high school counselors are there to mainly help with academics and academic behavior. Elementary school counselors deal with issues that are more than just academics. They are providing services on a more personable level, involving parents, other family members, teachers and other agencies (Coll, K., Freeman, B., 1997).

Elementary school counselors are given many tasks and have many hats they must wear during the day. It is essential to know the difference between Elementary school counselors and school counselors for middle and secondary schools. Their titles are “school counselors”, but have different roles and responsibilities.

The perception of Elementary school counselors by the principals and teachers is imperative not only for the school, but for the students. Principals and teachers play a huge role and involvement with the school counselors’ services and how it affects their students.

Elementary school counselors need to collaborate with the principal and teachers. According to Zallaquett (2005), the principal determines the role and functions of the elementary school counselor. At times the principal may have the elementary school counselor do jobs that are not in the lines of “counseling”. The principal may seem to forget the role of an elementary school counselor and this could affect the counselor’s job and the counseling services they provide. A study was done by Zallaquett (2005); in which randomly selected elementary school principals in the state of Florida, were surveyed on the effectiveness of the school counselors’ performance and how satisfied they (principals) were with their counselors. Ninety-two percent of elementary school principals were reported to be ‘very satisfied’ or “somewhat satisfied” with the performance of the school counselor. Only 7.7% reported that they were “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with the performance of the school counselor (Zallaquett, 2005). As shown from this study, many elementary school principals are extremely content with the counselors’

performance at their school. When the principals were asked about the impact of elementary school counselors, more than 70% of principals reported they “strongly agree” or “agree” that elementary school counselors have a positive impact on students, academically. When asked about how much of an impact the school counselors on mental health, 89% of principals deemed that the school counselor made a difference in behavioral and mental health of the students he or she worked with (Zallaquett, 2005). Elementary school counselors are shown to make a positive impact on the students, academically and emotionally. This not only reflects how principals view elementary school counselors, but also glorifies how well these elementary school counselors’ services are. The principals’ perception of elementary school counselors is vital as well as the teacher’s perception.

Teachers are on a busy agenda. They must make accommodations for their students; especially those who attend school counseling. Teachers collaborate with school counselors and their perception is important, like the principals. According to study done by Beesley (2004), 67% of teachers were reported to be extremely to somewhat satisfied with the school counseling services (p. 2). Teachers are content with the services school counselors provide at their schools. Another interesting notion was that from this study, “Results revealed that elementary school teachers reported significantly greater satisfaction with school counseling services than either middle/junior high or high school teachers” (Beesley, 2004). It is surprising to see how elementary school counselors triumph middle school and high school counselors. Elementary school counselors are seen as luxuries in elementary schools, however when it comes down to their service’s they are highly admired by educators. Elementary school counselors are doing something right! Teachers’ perceptions are imperative to express how well counselors are performing and how effective their services are for students.

Elementary school counselors implement and utilize various types of interventions and techniques for their counseling services. However, “Recent decades have also seen an increase in social-emotional and character development (SECD), which seeks to foster an improvement in numerous behavioral domains, such as prosocial skills, self-control, and academic achievement, and corresponding reductions in negative behaviors” (Snyder, F. J., Acock, A. C., Vuchinich, S., Beets, M. W., Washburn, I. J., & Flay, B. R. 2013). Elementary school counselors have created numerous interventions to help foster academic and emotional development for students. First technique, “Narrative counseling is based on the principle that life events and experiences are organized into stories that can adapt and change” (Eppler, C., Olsen, J., & Hidano, L., 2009). With this technique, students can tell or retell life stories with positive behavior and choices. This works best for small and large group counseling, and promotes students to share their stories to help them improve behavior and problem solving, personal social success, and more importantly, academic success (Eppler, C., Olsen, J., & Hidano, L. 2009). Biblio-narrative, similar to narrative counseling, where students create a story with new choices and behaviors’ and positive outcomes. These can be in a written or an oral form. This technique helps students present and discusses the issue and figure out ways they can solve it (Eppler, C., Olsen, J., & Hidano, L. 2009). Both techniques really help students to open up and become more receptive to expressing their emotions and personal life stories. This benefits students emotionally, because they can open up and they are learning to make good life choices. Using movie clips, or cinema counseling, helps students gain an insight on deeper problems and externalizing the problem. This is good way for students and counselors to connect and reach their goals. A more popular technique elementary school counselor tends to use, is small group counseling. “The small group counseling program was designed by the school counselor as an efficient and effective way to

provide services to a large number of students identified by their teachers and parents as having personal/social issues as well as academic difficulties” (Steen, S., & Kaffenberger, C. 2007). This is proven to be an effective tool, especially to address issues, such as: anger management, changing families, friendship, social skills etc. This specific counseling style can even help break the barrier for potential bullying.

Elementary school counselors are providing services that are benefiting students academically. A study that was done in the state of Florida encompassed just how well school counseling benefits students academically. There was an increase in retention due to state test scores.

In 2004, there were 1,245 retentions in kindergarten through fifth grade as compared with 297 in 2002. After the first grading period of the 2004-2005 school year, there were 2,819 overage students (a year older than their peer group) in elementary school, including an 8-year-old in kindergarten and another who would be 16 by sixth grade and eligible to drop out under Florida's compulsory attendance law (Landrum, 2007).

This disheartening study did not stop the state of Florida from implementing an intervention to help these retained students excel and further their education. Who did they call? School counselors! In this case the school counselor could offer different types of strategies and interventions. From group or individual counseling, character education, social development skills and parent conferencing, were just some helpful ways counselors could improve the education of retained students (Landrum, 2007). This was turned into a program and was highly effective. Teachers saw improvements in the students’ academics. Students were turning in work on time and parents vowed to spend more time working with their children (Landrum, 2007).

Elementary school counselors are once again benefiting students academically in school by facilitating intervention like these.

Another intervention that has been implemented in elementary schools is School Wide Positive Behavior Support intervention. “School-Wide Positive Behavior Support is a three-tiered systems approach that proactively addresses behavior concerns by teaching behavioral expectations and includes strategic support for students with more severe behavior issues” (Todd, Campbell, Meyer, & Horner, 2008). This intervention emphasizes on behavior in the classroom, at school and at home. Its purpose is to promote positive behavior. It is also known that “For schools using School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports, the school counselor is an essential member of the implementation team” (Martens, K., & Andreen, K. 2013). Once again school counselors are implementing and creating change within schools through these interventions. From this school-wide behavior intervention, “Check-in/Check-out establishes a structured daily routine for identified students in order to reduce and prevent the escalation of problem behaviors”(Martens, K., & Andreen, K. 2013). This intervention would include having students write down their behavior in the classroom throughout the day. Teachers would also record students’ behavior, as well as the parents. This intervention includes students, parents and teachers, which is why it has been so effective.

Elementary school counselors are changing the dynamic of schools. They are important figures in elementary schools. As a matter of fact “School counselors must be incorporated into school reform as leaders who are engaged in system-wide change to ensure student success” (House, R. M., & Hayes, R. L., April 2002). Elementary school counselors are not only leaders, but they are reforming elementary school altogether. Ways they can continue to succeed is if

“School counselors can become more effective leaders by collaborating with other professionals in the school building to influence system-wide changes. In this way, school counselors can have an impact on the whole school as well as individual students” (House, R. M., & Hayes, R. L., April 2002). Elementary school counselors play a huge role in the lives of the students and the school. They are creating positive change within the school and the lives of their students. It is also proven that “Poor students and students of color have a greater need than their more advantaged peers for caring and committed adult advocates and mentors in school settings because they often lack family and community members who can adequately fill these roles” (House, R. M., & Hayes, R. L., April 2002). Much of this has to do with the environment they live in. These students need someone who is not only there to listen and give advice, but to love and care for them. In communities where it is heavily affected by violence, substance abuse, teenager pregnancy and unemployment, has an impact on the young children who live in this environment. These children come to school with many developmental and social problems (Green, A., & Keys, S. 2001). This is where elementary school counselors’ come in and can make that impact on these children’s lives. School counselors need to get on a more personable level with students who may come from a troubling background. It is vital to not only “counselor” them with the various techniques, but to encourage them to succeed in school.

Methods & Procedures

For this study I decided to interview elementary school counselors and teachers. The goal was to gain a deeper understanding of school counseling, how they benefit the students academically and emotionally, and the teachers’ views on the counseling services. I found many articles pertaining to elementary school counseling through the CSUMB library database. These

articles were extremely helpful in answering my research questions and give background knowledge on elementary school counseling. The goal was to interview five elementary school counselors and five elementary school teachers. I emailed eight elementary schools around the Monterey Bay area. I wanted to interview teachers and counselors from different schools on the Monterey Peninsula, to receive different views and insight. For my interviews I would have questions set up especially for the school counselors and for the teachers. I transcribed more questions for the school counselors than the teachers. The interview would encompass the different techniques and theories school counselors and how they have seen a positive impact of their services for the students. As for the teachers, they would answer questions based on their views of the counseling services and how it impact their students.

Data & Findings

For my research I interviewed two elementary school counselors and one elementary school teacher. The sites I went to for my field studies were: La Joya Elementary in Salinas, CA., Elkhorn Elementary in Elkhorn, CA., and Prunedale Elementary in Prunedale, CA. All of the interviews' were confidential. For the purpose of this study I will address the counselors as Counselor A and Counselor B as well as the teacher, Teacher A. the series of questions are located in appendix A and B.

Interview with Counselor A

The first interviewee was Counselor A from Prunedale Elementary. This counselor alternates between Prunedale Elementary and Ecko Valley elementary school. Both of these schools are apart of the North Monterey County Unified School District (NMCUSD). To gain background knowledge Counselor A was asked, how long she has been a counselor and why she

decided to become a counselor (see Appendix A). Her response was that she has been a counselor for over a year. She decided to go into this profession because she loves working with kids and how there are so many things children are going through, that we do not know about. She wanted to become a therapist at first, in hopes of becoming a career coach for people with eating disorders. When asked about the certain techniques used with students and how are they beneficial (see appendix A), she tends to use different techniques' depending on the needs of the child. Counselor A, uses art therapy (expressing through arts), play therapy, implements the cognitive behavior theory into her sessions. Counselor A uses certain techniques, like art therapy for the younger grades, like kindergarten thru second grade. Counselor A explained to that her role is to believe good things will happen for her students. The question of how often Counselor A meets with students came up (see appendix A) and she explained how she meets with students each week, depending on the student. Counselor A will meet with students once a week or have a set schedule set up. Counselor A stressed the difficulty and disadvantage of alternating schools and how that can have an impact on how many students she sees. She said depending on the demand of students that need her services, will determine which elementary school she goes to. I asked how the parent-counselor collaboration was; she explained that there is no parental involvement. She stressed how hard it is for her to touch base with parents because they work all day. Counselor A never meets with parents, however she makes an effort to call parents if it's necessary. It is hard to engage parents with the counseling sessions, because many parents just pawn their children and the problems to the elementary school counselor. Overall, Counselor A expressed how stressful it is to work with parents. Counselor A was then asked about the collaboration with teachers (see appendix A). She explained how she communicates with teachers via email or one on one. She also collaborates with the principal as well. Counselor A

was asked if she is given the opportunity to observe classes or lead an in-class discussion. She has observed classes and particular students who need counseling services and she said that the principal and her are in the process of creating a classroom-based lesson for Counselor A to lead. The important question I asked her was how the counseling services benefited the students' emotional health. Counselor A explained that children want to stay in class because they are aware that the school counselor is on campus. Students feel safe and know they have someone they can trust, who they can talk to. Students are more likely to manage their emotions, especially controlling anger, after counseling services. I asked how students benefit academically from counseling services. She said students are going back to class ready to learn and that her services are beneficial for the students academically. Another question asked was, how she tries to display diversity into her services. Counselor A could not answer the question thoroughly, but stated that being that the school is predominantly Latino, she would like to learn Spanish in order to connect and communicate to her students and the parents. The environment is fairly new for her and she plans to incorporate more diversity. She expressed her concern during the Presidential election and how she saw the segregation between the White and Latino students. She said post-election, there were a lot of bullying and fearful students. She had many students in her office that week. Counselor A was asked why some elementary schools do not have counseling services and she basically said funding and how they hire interns who are temporary. She said that school districts mainly focus on providing school counselors for middle and high school. Counselor A said that elementary school counseling is seen as a "luxury". The last question was what techniques or programs she would like to implement. Last year, she implemented conflict management, which is for the older grades. Building neutral, thinking

skills, second step-social skills, relaxation techniques and regulate emotions are some techniques she would like to implement into her counseling services.

Interview with Counselor B

The second interview was with Counselor B, from La Joya elementary. This school is located in Salinas and is apart of the Santa Rita School District. I asked her the same questions, as Counselor A. Counselor B has been a counselor for three years. She alternates between elementary and middle school. Counselor B stated she did not have good school counselors growing up. They were not caring or fair. Counselor B wanted to become a fair, and caring counselor. The techniques she likes to use with her students are: Biblio-therapy, relaxation techniques, distinguishing emotions and feelings and visuals. Some techniques counselor B would like to add into her services is, Calming count, which will help children, learn how to count and keep them calm, Art therapy and more engaging activities. When asked about how often she sees her students, she said once a week for a fifteen to thirty minute session or once a month. She also offers group-counseling sessions. Counselor B gave some insight on how the teachers have to request for their student to receive counseling services (see appendix a). Teachers must submit a referral to the counselor, with the parents contact. Parents can also refer their child over the phone. Counselor B only meets with students who are having academic or behavior problems in school. She does not see children who are having problems at home. There is not much parental collaboration and parents do not attend counseling sessions. Sometimes Counselor B will call the student's parents if it is necessary. When asked about the collaboration (see appendix A) between teachers and counselor, she stated that emailing is the best way teachers and counselors communicate. Teachers and counselors will sometimes meet once a month for a meeting to discuss student matters. I asked her if she has observed classrooms and

leads and in class lesson or discussion (see appendix a). She answered that she does do in class observations. She goes and observes the students who need her counseling services, before she meets with them for the first time. However she does not provide in-class discussions' with the class or lead lessons. When asked about how students perform academically after her services (see appendix a), she said that they excel in reading; because she reads or has her students read when she counsels them. Counselor B was asked if she thinks her counseling services are good for the students' emotional health. She said it is because they do not have anyone understanding what goes on at home. She wants to teach them to be social and how to have social skills. She also sees their self-esteem boosted after counseling sessions. When asked about bringing diversity into her counseling services (see appendix a), she said she reacts and communicates with her students based on their culture and religion. Counselor B elaborated on the idea of when a child is grieving the loss of a loved one, she will ask if they are religious and approach the conversation from there. She said it is a lot easier to speak with the mothers about the child's problem, rather than fathers. Many students' parents do not want their child to expose any personal family information to counselors. Often students will not say anything to school counselors because their parents tell them not to. When asked about why elementary schools do not have counseling services (see appendix a) she said funding, and that in the Santa Rita School District they have one counselor for four to six schools. Many elementary school counselors are temporary and not full time. When asked on her thoughts on elementary school counseling and why it is important (see appendix a), she said this is the age where you can get them and mold them. She said it is better to help them now so they are not lost in middle school. Counselor B said it is important for them to recognize their feelings for the future. The last question, are their programs being implemented or already implanted, pertaining to school counseling (see

appendix a). Counselor B gave me a list of programs already implemented. She said “Café Talk” is a meeting with parents to get them more engaged and involved with school matters, especially counseling services. She has implemented Character Club, which teaches students about being apart of a club and how to build character. Conflict resolution and bullying are other programs Counselor B is in the process of implementing. She wants to teach her students responsibility, citizenship, caring, responsibility, trustworthiness, and fairness.

Interview with Teacher A

The last interview was with a second grade teacher from Elkhorn Elementary. This school is also in the North Monterey County Unified School District. Teacher A was asked six questions about the counseling services at Elkhorn and how they benefit her students. When asked about her and the counselor collaborate and discuss student matters (see appendix b) she explained to that if she wanted particular student to see the counselor, she would need to submit a referral. She does not get involved much she said she stays out of it. I asked her how effective the school counseling services are for her students (see appendix b). Teacher A said that when it is happening its effective and kids who do attend often go every two weeks. Teacher A was asked if she a positive trend from students who see the school counselor. Teacher A told said that she sees happiness in the students when they come back into the classroom. They appreciate having someone to talk to and someone to love them. She, as a teacher tries to talk with students one-on-one, but it is hard with so many students and the busy day-to-day agenda. I had asked her of she was involved with the parent-counselor collaboration(s), and she said no. All the teacher does is just refer the students to the counselor. However, Teacher A does make an effort to reach out to parents, via text. She wants to keep parents informed with what is going on in the classroom and with their child in general. Teacher A even goes out of her way to make home

visits to discuss school matters with parents and students. She even attends birthday parties to become more involved with her students lives. The next question asked was if her students benefit academically from counseling services. She said her students do benefit and they are so much more focused and go back to their in class assignments. The students are more open and receptive, they come back ready to learn! She did give her opinion on how counseling services are specifically for students who have learning disabilities or behavioral problems. Teacher A, says that students who are excelling in academically but are going through issues, emotionally, do not qualify for school counseling services. Teacher A would love for all her students to have access to the school counselor. Lastly, Teacher A was asked if the school counselor at her school is rated or reviewed for their services. She has said she has never had to review or rate school counselors. She said that there have been too many school counselors coming in and out of the school, it was hard to keep track. She said a previous school counselor had quit because she could not handle some of the students having lice and that it was not the best fit. She yearns for school counselors to come into the classroom and teach a lesson on emotions or bullying. She said it is really important of young students to know this.

From this field study, it is transparent that elementary school counseling is beneficial for students, emotionally and academically. With the different techniques used it helpful for students. The teacher's perspective is very important as well. There is much gained from this field study. It was an honor to meet with these individuals'.

Discussion

The principle aim for this study was to present the benefits counseling services for elementary school students. Elementary school counselors have evolved over time and have shifted the paradigm within their practice. Elementary school counselor was implemented after

middle and high school counseling services. Academic success and positive behavior from the students has been a goal for elementary school counselors. Utilizing a plethora of interventions and techniques only proves how effective elementary school counseling is for students.

However, elementary school counseling does have its disadvantages. The lack of parental involvement and engagement is stressful for elementary school counselors. Teachers would appreciate more counselor awareness and counselors leading an in-class discussion/intervention. Elementary school counselors are seen as a luxury in schools. Funding is one of the main issues why elementary schools do not have a counseling program or counselor. What is imperative is that elementary school counselors have not changed one thing, which is to care and provide exceptional services for young students.

Limitations

Some minor setbacks from this research would be the number of counselors and teachers I had interviewed. The goal was to interview five counselors and five teachers. Not all of the schools emailed me back right away, which made it difficult to interview the amount of counselors and teachers desired. The timing was another issue. Inputting the time and making sure all the interviews were completed within a particular time frame. The interviews were kept to a minimum, due to the busy schedule of both the counselors and teachers.

Recommendations

Further recommendations for this research are, more elementary counselors in elementary schools. This is crucial for students' development, academically, emotionally, behaviorally and socially. Elementary school counseling should not be seen as a "luxury" but as a precedence, especially over middle and high school guidance counseling. Elementary school is an age where school counselors can help teach students how to control their emotions and to succeed in school.

This is an age where counselors can break the self-esteem issues and bullying. More parental involvement with their child's counseling session(s) is important. This would benefit the school counselor and the child. The parent would become aware of their child's problems, whether it's academic or emotional. By elementary school counselors proctoring an in-class intervention or lesson, would have a positive impact on many students, rather than one student. All elementary school students should know how to express and identify emotions, learn calming, relaxation techniques and be granted the ability to talk. Stemming off this recommendation, it is also vital for students to have awareness of school counseling services. A student having the knowledge of a school counselor on site is beneficial. Students would feel safe and comfortable having someone that they can trust and someone who genuinely cares for them. I think it is important for future educators and current educators to know their role in regards to counseling and how they collaborate with school counselors. Teachers should also know more about the school counseling services, if their school offers it.

Conclusion

To conclude, I cannot stress enough how important elementary school counseling is for students. Elementary school counselors are changing the paradigm of counseling services and elementary schools. Their services are benefiting students academically and emotionally. With implementation of many interventions and techniques, elementary school counselors are providing unique, personable and exceptional counseling services. Parental and teacher collaboration with the counseling sessions is imperative and benefits the students, as well as the counselors. Elementary school counseling should not be seen or treated as a "luxury, but rather mandatory for elementary schools. Step by step elementary school counselors are changing lives and changing the dynamic of schools.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions for Elementary School Counselors

1. How long have you been an elementary school counselor? And what made you want to enter this profession?
2. What counseling technique(s) do you prefer to use with the students? And how is the technique or techniques beneficial for the students?
3. Are there any techniques you would like to implement into your counseling services? If so, what are they?
4. How often do you have students in your office? Do you see some students more than others?
5. How is the parents' involvement and collaboration? Are parents included in school counseling sessions if needed?
6. What does the collaboration between you and the teacher look like? How often do you meet/discuss the students needs?
7. Are you given the opportunity to observe classes or proctor a class discussion?
8. How well do students' perform (academically) from counseling services? Have you seen any improvements in students who have access to counseling services?
9. Do you think School-counseling services are beneficial to the students' emotional health? Why or why not?
10. How is diversity brought into your School Counseling Services? How does this benefit the students?
11. Why do you think some Elementary schools have NO School counselor?
12. Do you think Elementary school counseling is a vital component for schools? Why or why not?
13. Are there any programs (pertaining to School Counseling) that are being implemented or are already implemented in the school?

Appendix B

Interview Questions for Elementary School Teachers

1. How often do you and the school counselor collaborate and discuss student matters?
2. How well do you find the School Counseling services effective for the students?
3. Do you see a positive trend, from the students who utilize school counseling services?
4. Are you involved with the School Counselor and parent collaboration(s)?
5. Do students benefit, academically, from the school counseling services? And how?
6. Are school counselors reviewed and rated based on how well their counseling services are for the students?