Targeted Group Counseling

All Programmatic Levels

**Activity Description:**
The school counselor will lead small group counseling for targeted students with similar identified needs related to academic, career, and personal/social development. The school counselor screens students that are identified through a variety of methods, obtains parent permission; identifies, establishes and delivers curriculum and theories to be used, and follows up with students when the group is completed.

**School Counselor Performance Standard 2:**
The professional school counselor facilitates delivery of the WV Comprehensive Developmental School Counseling Program for all students.

**Function 2E: RESPONSIVE SERVICES**
The professional school counselor provides a continuum of interventions in response to student needs.

**Indicator 2E3:**
The professional school counselor facilitates targeted group interventions for identified groups of students.

**GOAL:** Counselor will deliver group counseling to targeted students to support development of knowledge and skills related to academic, career and/or personal/social needs in order to improve school success.

**Rationale:** While classroom guidance provides students with general knowledge and skills related to academic, career and personal/social development, some student needed additional targeted interventions. Some students need additional support. Group counseling provides an opportunity for students to develop insights about themselves and others when they share common concerns that may interfere with school success. Not only does this maximize the use of counselor time by working with several students at once, but research shows group intervention processes help students grow and learn together. Groups aid students in changing attitudes, habits, world views and behaviors that may be counter productive or self-destructive. Group counseling supports the student’s awareness of commonality among peers, which increases self-esteem and aids in coping with developmental, situational, and academic issues.

**Activity Statement:** The counselor will create a safe supportive environment and use a strategic process and best practice guidelines to facilitate students in coping with and overcoming issues related to academic, career and/or personal/social domains.

**Materials:** CR = Counselor Resource *(These resources are found under the handouts column of the Protocol web page.)*

- CR1a – High School: Student Needs Assessment
- CR1b – Middle School: Student Needs Assessment
- CR2 – Introduction to Groups
- CR3 – Parent Notification Letter (sample)
- CR4 – Parent Consent Form (sample)
- CR5 – Student Referral Form - Teacher
- CR6 – Student Self Referral Form
CR7 – Student Group Participation and Confidentiality Agreement
CR8 – Mid-term Evaluation Form – Sample
CR9 – Sample Ground Rules - Narrative
CR10 – Sample Ground Rules - Poster
GROUP LESSON PLANS: http://wvde.state.wv.us/counselors/group-lessons.html
Book – Group Counseling Strategies and Skills (click to open) by Ed Jacobs, Robert Masson and Riley Harville

**Procedures:**

1. Meet with principal to discuss implementation of group counseling on a yearly basis.
2. Discuss options that will be least disruptive to students’ schedules
   i. Lunch time groups (send requests for early out to pick up lunch and bring with them)
   ii. Before or after school (arrange necessary transportation)
   iii. Stagger periods (Week 1: 1st period; Week 2: 2nd Period; Week 3: 3rd Period, etc. Staggering periods contributes to little time missed in each subject.)
3. Educate classroom teachers regarding the purpose behind group counseling, time needed for group and the positive impact it can have on student’s school achievement and their classroom.
4. Conduct needs assessment to determine what kind of groups are needed and by whom.
5. Create a process for referrals (self, parent, teacher, community leaders)
6. Use school data to identify students with specific issues that may impact achievement (i.e. attendance reports, dropout risk factors, etc.) to determine appropriate small group assignments
7. Identify priority issues in which group counseling is needed by a sufficient number of students (Recommend 6 – 8 students per group).
8. Select students from referrals, complete individual interviews with each participate to screen student’s willingness to participate and discuss rules of confidentiality. Participation should be voluntary, not required.
9. Develop outline and timeline for group.
10. Obtain parental consent for student’s group participation when students will be missing instructional time.
11. Inform relevant teachers when group involves students missing some or all of their class.
12. Create passes for students to be excused from class with specific dates and times.
13. Discuss confidentiality with group members and sign confidentiality agreement.
14. Assess appropriate curriculum from school counseling website http://wvde.state.wv.us/counselors/group-lessons.html or other sources.
15. Use resources and follow procedures in materials list.
16. Document participation in Groups
17. Conduct pre and post surveys to identify benefits and outcomes related to group
18. Use school data, parent and staff feedback to help determine long-term success of groups

**Resources:** http://wvde.state.wv.us/counselors/group-lessons.html

**Evaluation:**

- Pre and Post survey related to topic of group, perceived improvement
- School data related to attendance, behavior, etc. before and after the group
- Number of referrals
- Group sign-in sheets verifying attendance
- Number of groups held
- Number of participations in groups
- Teacher surveys indicating student improvements