

Suggestions and Tips for New Counselors

Use the visuals, forms, letters, and Internet sites to organize your program. These simple tools will help beginning and seasoned counselors navigate through the year.

Group Rules (Visual Clues)

APPRECIATIONS

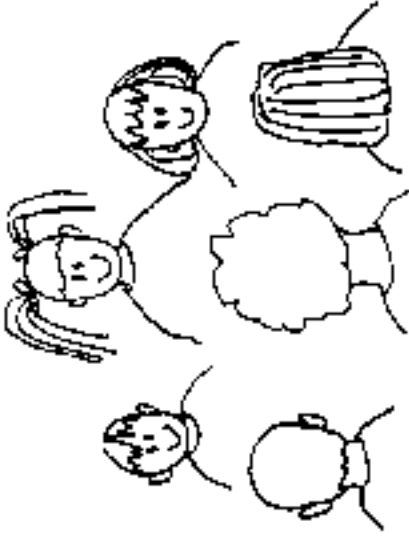


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LISTENING



PARTICIPATION

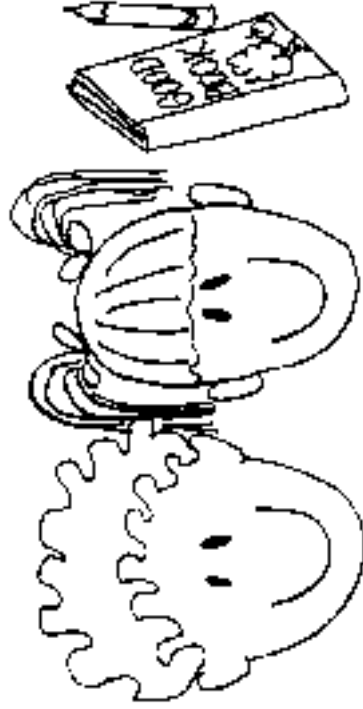


RIGHT TO PASS

NO PUT DOWNS



MUTUAL RESPECT



Yourself

Others

Things

Counseling Referral Form

Student Name _____ Teacher _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Name of Parent or Guardian _____

Entered this School _____ from _____
(Date) (Former School)

Check behaviors observed:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| _____ physical limitation | _____ overactive | _____ daydreams |
| _____ eating problems | _____ aggressive | _____ fights |
| _____ sarcastic | _____ withdrawn | _____ tantrums |
| _____ moody | _____ alcohol use | _____ sleep problems |
| _____ steals | _____ lies | _____ drug use |
| _____ abuse symptoms | _____ bizarre behavior | |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

Friends _____ has few _____ has many _____ has none

Give a summary of grades: _____

Behavior problems: _____

Relationship to other students: _____

Has child ever been placed in a special class? ___ LD ___ EMH ___ ED ___ none

_____ Repeated a grade? Which grade? _____

Comments: _____

Date referred _____

Date received _____

Date of counseling _____

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Discipline With Dignity Intervention Form

Student _____

Date _____

Grade _____

Teacher _____

Student Behavior:

1. Tardy # _____
2. Materials not on hand _____
3. Uncooperative _____
4. Negative response to verbal warnings _____
5. Conflict with another student _____
6. Inappropriate language used _____
7. Inappropriate gestures made in class _____
8. Other (please explain) _____

Action Steps That Have Been Taken:

Conference with the student: Date _____ Outcome of conference _____

Note sent home with the student: Date _____ Outcome of note _____

Telephoned the parent: Date _____ Outcome of phone call _____

Student referred to the counselor: Date _____ Outcome of meeting _____

Conference with student, parent, teacher, and maybe counselor: Date: _____
Outcome _____

Discipline Referral: Date _____ Outcome _____

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Special Recognition for the Month

Teachers:

Please recognize a student from your team for the areas listed below. The students will be recognized for their outstanding behavior in the areas listed during the forums that will be held for your team. I will get the certificate ready and hand them out if you will just turn the name in to me a week before the forum.

Please turn this form in by _____ so that I will have time needed to get certificates printed and ready to go.

1. Math student of the team for the month
2. Science student of the team for the month
3. Geography student of the team for the month
4. Language Arts student of the team for the month

Students who exhibited appropriate and helpful life skills will be recognized. Please list the students who exhibited a life skill in a positive way, what life skill they exhibited, and what they did. You may have more than one of these, but do try to limit it to around five.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Students of the month will also be recognized for outstanding behavior, academic work, good citizenship, excellent exhibition of life skills, and whatever other expectations your team would like to add. Please list your students of the month also.

(Class Teacher) _____

(Class Teacher) _____

(Class Teacher) _____

(Class Teacher) _____

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Career Activity File — Counseling Tools K-12

Date _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

During the first two grading quarters, a minimum of four reports were sent home regarding your child's academic progress: progress reports, parent conference notices, grade checks, and report cards. A review of our records indicate that _____ has failed the following subjects:

A minimum of five credits must be earned for placement in the eighth grade, and your child has earned _____.

For the second semester, it is possible to earn only two and one-half credits.

A meeting has been scheduled to discuss the academic progress of your child. Please plan to attend this meeting scheduled for _____.
(day of week, date, time)

Sincerely,

Counselor

Principal

Date _____

Dear Parent/Guardian of _____

The teachers at _____ are committed to providing the best educational learning environment possible for every student. Understanding that our students' parents or guardians play a key role in promoting this environment, we strongly encourage and support parental involvement at our school.

This letter is written in hopes that you can help us impress on your child the importance of his or her academic achievement. Your child has earned _____ F's on his or her progress report for the past nine weeks. I am concerned that your child does not understand that he or she is in danger of making a failing grade for the course.

Please call _____ to set up an appointment to meet with your child's teachers. I would be glad to help you meet with his or her teachers in an effort to increase _____ academic potential.

Respectfully,

Counselor

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Career Activity File — Counseling Tools K-12

Date _____

Dear _____:

The parent of _____
would like for you to contact him/her at the
following number _____.

The parent/guardian called wanting to know how
_____ was doing in class.

Thank you for your help in communicating with the
parents of our students.

If you have any questions, please see me, and I will
be glad to answer them.

Thanks,

Counselor

Date _____

Teachers:

The parent/guardian of _____
has called and would like to meet with your team.

The appointment is set for _____
on _____ the _____.

The team should focus on discussing the following
matters, which are of concern to the parents/
guardians: _____

If you have any questions, please contact me.
I appreciate your help with the parental meetings
and the positive support that you bring.

Thanks,

Counselor

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**School Service Application
2001-2002**

Name _____
 Grade _____
 ID Number _____
 Why would you like to be a school service assistant?

Attitude: Come to school with a good attitude.
Confidentiality: As a school service worker, it is important to remember that any information pertaining to another student or teacher must be left in the office.
Grades: You must make all A's, B's, and C's. If you fall below this level, you will be placed back in your exploratory class.

Discipline: You must conduct yourself in a professional manner and assist where you are needed. If you are suspended from school, you will no longer be in school service.

_____ student signature
 _____ parent signature
 _____ teacher recommendation
 _____ teacher recommendation
 _____ counselor signature

Parental Request for Grades

To: Teachers of _____
 To: Parents/Guardians of _____
 Date: _____
 From: _____, Counselor

The parents/guardians of the student listed above have requested a grade check on their child. Please complete this and turn it in to me by _____.

Social Studies: _____
 Science: _____
 Math: _____
 Language Arts: _____
 Behavior in class: _____
 Number of missed assignments: _____
 Make-up work that can be done: _____

_____ Please include any worksheets that are needed.

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*Counselor Contact to Student
Counselor Meeting*

To: _____

Date: _____

Please allow _____ to
come to the counselor's office at _____
on the _____.

He/She has requested to see the counselor. I
appreciate you for giving this your attention. If the
time is not convenient, please notify me so that I
can change the time.

I do not want our students to miss something in
class. They need to be there for instructional time.
There will be no problem in rescheduling this
appointment.

Thanks,

Counselor

Student Contact to Counselor

Name: _____

Date: _____

Counselor I would like to see:

I need to see the counselor because _____

The counselor will send you an appointment time
during one of your classes. Your teacher will give
you this time. It will be your responsibility to keep
that appointment.

Internet Sites for Counselors and Teachers

The Web site addresses were accurate, and all content was appropriate on the following Web sites during the development and production of this product. However, because Web sites sometimes change, the Guidance Division assumes no responsibility for a site's content. The inclusion of a Web site does not constitute an endorsement of that site's other pages, products, or owners. You are encouraged to verify all Web sites before using them.

Newsletter

The American Counseling Association (ACA) publishes a free electronic newsletter that can be delivered to the counselor's mailbox every other Thursday. Sign up to receive this newsletter by going to <http://www.counseling.org/enews/subscribe>

Projects and Ideas

The *Champions of Active Learning* program is an initiative designed to encourage and support innovative instructional programs that result in improved achievement for students in the middle grades. Specifically, the goal of the program is to help schools find creative ways to actively engage students in their own learning through hands-on activities and instruction. This program is funded by the JPMorgan Chase Foundation. To learn more about the specific programs developed by middle grade teachers throughout the country, contact this site: <http://www.publiceducation.org/resources/chase3.htm>

Library Power is a national program designed to improve teaching and learning by revitalizing library and media programs in public elementary and middle schools across the country. Using the school library media program as a catalyst for school improvement, the Library Power program is demonstrating new ways of educating young people and making an impact in schools nationwide. Contact this site: <http://www.librarypower.org/>

Career Related Sites

http://www.quintcareers.com/career_resources.html

Access this extensive teacher career resources tool kit, which organizes the best career resources available on the Web in categories for easy searching.

Content Specific Web Sites

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/>

The New York Times' Learning Network provides short news articles and daily quizzes as well as an extensive collection of lesson plans relating to news articles and features. Some articles relate to careers.

<http://www.eduplace.com>

Education Place provides free K-8 resources for teachers, students, and parents. Its resources can be used to enhance student learning in reading, language arts, science, social studies, and math.

Online Lesson Plans

<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/>

Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators is an online source of useful Web resources for teachers, including lesson plans, links to other sites, and tips for evaluating materials.

<http://school.discovery.com>

Discover School provides a broad array of online materials, including lesson plans and classroom activities, for both teachers and students.

<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/edfirst/>

Pacific Bell's *Education First* Web site offers links to sites containing lesson plans and Internet learning activities.

**A Comprehensive Guidance Plan
will allow a school district to:**

**Make all subject matter more
meaningful and relevant through the
infusion/integration of career concepts.**

Navigating Streams of Paper

“I have so much paperwork that I’ve little time to actually counsel,” is the lament of many school counselors. I’ve discovered three tools that provide organization and sanity in my busy, demanding guidance position. These three lifesavers are:

- A three-ring binder
- Daily log
- Work files

Three-Ring Binder

This is very helpful for organizing the sundry notes and sample forms that begin accumulating from the first day on the job. Initially, I started with a 1½-inch binder, but before the end of the year, I had expanded to a 3-inch binder.

The following arrangement has served me well, but each situation will be different, so use what seems applicable to our given circumstances. I’ve listed just a few examples of documents you might place behind designated dividers.

Inside front cover sleeve:

Place blank, three-hole-punched log sheets.

Within binder, front to back:

1. Log sheets in date order, with the most current logs forward
2. Clear sleeves containing
 - school map
 - bell schedule
 - lunch schedule
 - faculty and staff roster
 - magazine clippings on stress management (Hey, it’s your book — put anything legal you want in it!)

3. Labeled dividers

- *beginning of the year* – orientation dates, notes on class lists and teachers desiring to do homebound duty or tutor
- *computer data* – notes to help you navigate your computer system
- *end of the year* – copies of end-of-year forms given to teachers to complete, your own to-do lists, and failure notice information
- *Exceptional Student Education (ESE)* – ESE class hours calculated list, grade class lists of ESE students and ESE forms with other notes written directly on them
- *ESE referrals* – procedural outline, referral forms with notes recorded on them and notes pertinent to referral process
- *General* – This section is for everything that doesn’t fit elsewhere. These may be separate divisions if you have enough information on any one area – homebound and home schooling information; sample forms of child study team report and referral for county mental health; attendance policy; dress code policy; phone, fax machine, and copier operation.
- *Individual Education Plan (IEP)* and staffing meetings – examples of parent letters, notes on required forms, who attends, what to do if a parent requests a student be removed from the program, what to do after IEP/staffing, and notes on gifted program
- *Limited English Proficient (LEP)* – notes on meanings of terms like LY (student is being served in the program), LZ (student can cope in

regular classroom), tracking procedures, and structure of LEP committee

- *Registering* – example of forms and list of items needed to register (birth certificate, health record, proof of residence)
- *Scheduling* – copy of master course schedule (I keep a separate working schedule in my desk tray.), notes on changing and withdrawing students from classes, and retained student list
- *Testing* – guidelines for participation in state and district assessments and alternative assessments
- *504 / Academic Instruction Plan (AIP)* – notes on who qualifies for plans and procedures for scheduling meetings to serve or dismiss a student

Daily Log

During your internship to become a guidance counselor, it is usually required that you complete a log of your time and activities for the necessary hours. Although I had not observed any of my mentors keeping track of their daily activities, it was a useful device that this avid journalist has found beneficial on more than one occasion. The most important data to record are names and dates.

Though I have never verbally referred to my log as evidence, I have on many occasions been able to say, “On ‘such and such’ a date, I saw ‘so and so’ or I mailed ‘such and such.’”

Consider this tool a private journal rather than a public record. It is not meant as legal evidence but as a personal crutch to maneuver around the variety of tasks and

interruptions a counselor must handle. A daily log gives me peace of mind, if nothing else. I refer to it time and again to see if I have completed an activity; which students were referred, when; what date I counseled a particular child; and if, or when, a teacher memo was sent.

Here is a short version of my log sheet:

Counselor’s Log for: <u>January</u>	
Time	Activity

Work Files

I have six hanging file folders at the front of my desk file drawer, where they are easily accessible. They are labeled for the five workdays – Monday through Friday – and “Next Week.” Their purpose is to provide an easy method of follow-up and a quick start for the day, as well as preventing misplacement of important papers. Simply go to the appropriate day of the week and complete the work within that folder. Mondays are the day to also look at the “Next Week” folder then distribute its contents among the daily folders.

These three simple tools, followed faithfully, can help beginning counselors navigate the new job territory. They will help the experienced counselor tame the growing encroachment of the paper jungle and lessen the strain of accountability to students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

Permission granted from the Association for Career and Technical Education, *Techniques*, October 2001. Cheryl Bennett-Abney is a middle school counselor in Clewiston, Florida.