



School Counselor Frequently Asked Questions

What exactly does a school counselor do?

School counseling services are available to ALL students, not just those with an emotional disability or in a crisis. It is my job to make sure that students are happy and doing their best at school. This is a tall order since so many factors go into kids doing well---their ability to focus and pay attention, their relationships with peers and teachers, how well they can manage their feelings and impulses, and their lives outside of school. I can address these issues using individual or small group counseling, as well as classroom guidance lessons. I ask kids to think of me as a coach who helps them solve their problems. I am also an adult in the building with whom they are never "in trouble."

How are you different from a therapist at an outside agency?

I frequently see children just once or twice, or in the classroom setting rather than my office. Although I do often help children with family problems and behavior at home, my primary role is to deal with school-related concerns. Sometimes an issue is better addressed more intensively in a therapeutic setting, and with greater direct parental involvement. Contact me if you'd like me to recommend an outside therapist for your child.

How do children get to see you?

Children may come to me in a variety of ways. Usually it's by recommendation of the classroom teacher and/or the parent. Often, children will approach me themselves and ask if they can see me or fill out a Counselor Request Form. They may also ask their teacher or someone in the office to give me a message.

Will you notify me if you see my child?

Children frequently pop in to tell me about relatively minor or time-limited issues like an argument with a peer or the death of a pet. If that happens, I may not notify you unless: there is a safety concern, your child has asked to see me repeatedly, or if the worry or problem is significant (by adult standards).

What support and resources can you provide to parents and families?

Working with parents is one of my favorite parts of my job. I often consult with parents on concerns they have about their child's social, emotional or behavioral well-being. I provide strategies and resources parents can use at home. I also connect families to resources available within our community. Additionally, I have access to lots of different opportunities for families who are facing financial hardship.