

Education 675
Theories and Strategies for Counseling School Aged Children
Fall 2008

Instructor:
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Overview:

The focus of this course is on the understanding and application of contemporary theories of counseling for school aged children and adolescents. Theories will be studied with respect to key concepts, the therapeutic process and goals, and specific techniques. Students will apply their skills in practice sessions with school-aged children. The physiological, cognitive, social, and emotional development of children as well as their environment (including the school) will be emphasized so that interventions are consistent with the children's needs.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will acquire knowledge of children's social and emotional development.
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of various counseling theories and intervention strategies.
3. Students will be able to select an intervention strategy appropriate to a child's need(s) in a variety of situations.
4. Students will be able to effectively apply learned techniques in practice counseling sessions to promote positive mental health in the client.
5. Students will develop sensitivity to children's needs and develop patience when trying to bring about change in children.
6. Students will begin to develop their personal theoretical foundation to their approach to counseling school-aged children.
7. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the ethical and professional issues in counseling school-aged children.

Required Texts:

Wagner, W. G. (2008). *Counseling, Psychology, and Children 2nd Edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Doll, B., Zucker, S. & Brehm, K. (2004). *Resilient Classrooms*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Merrell, K.W. (2008). *Helping students overcome depression and anxiety: A practical guide 2nd edition*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

McGinnis, E. & Goldstein, A.P. (1997). *Skillstreaming the Elementary School Child: New Strategies and Perspectives for Teaching Prosocial Skills* (revised edition). Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Optional Text:

Murphy, J. J. (2008). *Solution-focused counseling in schools 2nd edition*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

There are also a set of Reserve Readings that can be found on blackboard.

Class Requirements:

1. Attend all class sessions.
2. Complete assigned readings in preparation for class discussion and participation.
3. Conduct a diagnostic interview with the parent(s) of a child with whom you are working to complete requirement #4 (described below). **You must provide a copy of the interview with responses as well as a written summary of the interview findings to the instructor prior to beginning any practice sessions.** The format of this summary will be provided in class.
4. Conduct a series of 4 practice sessions (30 minutes each) with a non-problem child or children. **The first of these sessions must represent child-centered play therapy.**

Prior to beginning the practice sessions, you will conduct a diagnostic interview (as specified in requirement #3 with the parent(s) of a child with whom you are working.

All practice sessions must be videotaped. You will use these videotapes to evaluate your sessions and complete required self-evaluations. **You are required to complete a self-evaluation report on each play session and submit that report prior to the next session. You will submit the first and third videotape to the instructor for review.** The report forms can be found on the class blackboard site along with the evaluation form that I will use.

It will be necessary for you to purchase your own play materials unless you plan to use the observation and taping lab in Jones 205. The absolute necessary toys you will need include: bopbag (preferably a superhero or villain portrayed), doll, puppet family, crayons and paper, baby bottle, tinker toy or construction type toy, play-doh, toy soldiers, small car or truck, nerf ball, cotton rope, sunglasses, telephones, costume jewelry. These can be purchased at area toy stores and dollar stores. Any other toys you wish to include should comply with what is recommended during class discussion of optimal toys.

*****You must have written parental permission to work with the children and to videotape. All sessions must be completed by December 3, 2008.*****

5. Resilient Classroom Project (see attached description at back of syllabus). **Due November 19, 2008.**

6. Provide an outline for a social skills program (**Due December 10, 2008**). The format of this outline can be found on the class blackboard site. It will be reviewed in class.

Grading:

4 videotaped counseling sessions with self-evaluations	60 points (15 points each)
Interview Summary	5 points
Social Skills Plan	10 points
Resilient Classroom Project	<u>25 points</u>
	100 points

Schedule of Topics and Assigned Readings

Date	Topic	Readings
8/27	Orientation and Overview of the Course Issues surrounding therapy with children Resilience	Wagner, Ch. 1, 2, & 3
9/3	Positive Psychology and its Application	Wagner, Ch. 6
9/10	Assessment Diagnostic Interview	Wagner, Ch. 5 Merrell, Ch. 3
9/17	Diagnostic Interview cont. Resilient Classrooms	Doll, Zucker, & Brehm Ch. 1-5
9/24	Resilient Classrooms	Doll, Zucker, & Brehm Ch. 6-10
10/1	Client-centered Theory and Interventions Play principles and procedures	Wagner, Ch. 9 & 10 Reserve (Sweeney & Landreth)
10/8	Limits and consequences in the playroom Can begin practice sessions after this class	
10/15	Behavioral and Cognitive Behavioral Theory and Techniques	Wagner, Ch. 11 & 12 Reserve (Knell)
10/22	The use of games in therapy Bibliotherapy – Bring therapeutic children’s book to class to share.	Reserve (Nickerson & O’Laughlin) Reserve (“Bibliotherapy”)
10/29	Adlerian Theory and Techniques Reality Theory and Techniques	Reserve (Kottman #1 and Kottman #2)
11/5	Solution Focused Counseling	Murphy book
11/12	Social skills training Why do we need to address social skills training? Procedures for skillstreaming	M & G, Ch. 1-3 M & G, Ch. 4
11/19	Skillstreaming Video	M & G, Ch. 5-6 M & G, Ch. 7 M & G, Ch. 8
11/26	Thanksgiving Holiday	
12/3	Strategies and techniques for helping student with depression	Merrell, Ch. 5 - 8
12/10	Strategies and techniques for helping student with anxiety	Merrell, Ch 9-10

Resilient Classroom Project

You will work with a cooperating teacher in a collaborative consulting relationship to help build resilience in the classroom. In order to successfully complete this project, you will follow the following steps:

1. Establish a collaborative relationship with a willing teacher (preferably at an elementary level)
 - Explain purpose of this project.
 - Define resilient classrooms in jargon free language and explain the relationship between resilience and academic success.
 - Describe the consulting relationship, emphasizing collaboration.
 - Outline the process of the project and provide a **timetable** to the teacher.
 - Obtain **teacher and principal permission**.
2. Gather Data
 - **Interview** the teacher about aspects of the classroom as they relate to resilience.
 - Complete the Class Maps Survey
3. Analyze and Graph Class Data
 - Present **data graphically** in format that is easily understood.
4. Set Classroom Goal
 - Review data with the teacher.
 - Identify strengths and areas that may need attention
 - Complete the **Goal Setting Worksheet** with the teacher.
 - Articulate 1 goal for classroom change
5. Discuss Data with Students
 - Schedule a classroom meeting
 - Review Class Maps data and ask for accuracy.
 - Obtain suggestions for change
 - Complete the **Classroom Meeting Worksheet**
6. Develop Plan for Change
 - Complete **Intervention Planning Worksheet**
 - Focus on informal interventions
 - Complete **Plan Record Worksheet**.
7. Check Back with Teacher
 - Monitor the plan
 - Collect data
8. Summarize Outcome
 - Write a **1-paragraph summary** of your outcome based on collected data.

You will turn into the instructor the following materials:

- Teacher and Principal Permission (due by 10/8)
- Timetable (due by 10/8)
- Teacher Interview
- Graph of Class Maps Data
- Goal Setting Worksheet
- Classroom Meeting Worksheet
- Intervention Planning Worksheet
- Plan Record Worksheet
- Plan Record Worksheet