
Chapter 1

Foundation of Guidance and Counselling Services

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Foundation of Guidance and Counselling Services

In this chapter:

- History of guidance and counselling services in Manitoba
 - Role and function of school counsellors
 - Service areas for a comprehensive and developmental approach to guidance and counselling
 - Three areas of service delivery focus
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History of Manitoba School Guidance and Counselling

The area of school guidance and counselling has changed to meet the needs of society over the past 40 years.

In the 1960s,

- classroom-based guidance classes related to family life education and health
- individual counselling focused on personal/social issues

From the 1970s to the 1980s, guidance and counselling services provided

- aptitude testing
- course selection guidance
- personal counselling
- educational counselling

From the 1990s to the present, guidance and counselling services include

- comprehensive and developmental guidance and counselling programs
- proactive prevention programs in a variety of areas such as personal safety, self-concept, study skills, and career exploration
- intensive and action-oriented counselling in areas of crisis intervention, mental health, relationships, appropriate behaviour, abuse, and violence

Guidance and counselling services have merged in the twenty-first century. The information-giving capacity of guidance services has been consolidated with the personal development opportunities offered by counselling approaches at all grade levels. This has been done to augment student learning, decision making, and self-awareness and to address specific needs. Infusing the guidance component of service delivery into regular curriculum programming has become more common.

Role and Function of School Counsellors*

The primary goal of school guidance and counselling services is to enhance and promote student learning. These services are designed to provide supports and resources to students at all grade levels, to their families, and to educators. They are intended to facilitate the educational, personal, social, emotional, and career development of students in schools and in the community.

School counsellors provide a continuum of preventive, developmental, and intervention services within educational settings and facilitate referrals to community resources. They are members of the student services team. The school counsellor's role includes

- counselling
- education
- assisting in the development of effective behavioural change
- school-based consultation, planning, and coordination within and beyond the school setting in the best interest of students

The following descriptions outline four core services that school counsellors can provide within the school setting. These descriptions are intended to be used as guidelines for counsellors, administrators, and school staff in determining the specific role that a counsellor will perform in a particular school.

Educational services rely on a team approach. The primary differences between the work of Early Years, Middle Years, and Senior Years school counsellors is not in what they do, but how they do it.



School counsellors provide a continuum of preventive, developmental, and intervention services to all students.

* Source: Prince Edward Island Department of Education. Student Services Division. *School Counselling Services: Standards and Guidelines*. Charlottetown, PE: Prince Edward Island Department of Education, June 2005. 5. Adapted with permission.

Service Areas*



Professional ethics require that school counsellors refer students to other trained professionals when the presenting issue is beyond their training or scope of practice.

1. Counselling

School counselling functions may include individual, group, and class work to provide both an intervention and prevention service. The intention of the counselling service is to

- respond to emotional, social, intellectual, academic, career, physical, safety, and health needs in a developmentally appropriate manner
- provide an environment that is conducive to self-exploration in order to develop an awareness of personal uniqueness
- promote personal and social development appropriate to developmental stages
- help students, through their families and their community, grow in areas such as self-esteem and individual responsibility, and in skills such as decision making and social relationships
- support and enhance a student's academic progress through a variety of activities,** which may include individual assessments, goal setting, instruction in study habits and organizational skills, and assisting with the development of individual education plans (IEPs), which include behaviour intervention plans (BIPs) and individual transition plans (ITPs).

2. Prevention

School counsellors may develop and implement plans and programs to facilitate student success in three ways:

- as part of a school team process
- as part of a student support team process
- as part of an individual counselling process

* Source: Prince Edward Island Department of Education. Student Services Division. *School Counselling Services: Standards and Guidelines*. Charlottetown, PE: Prince Edward Island Department of Education, June 2005. 6–9. Adapted with permission.

** See Chapter 4 for additional information.

These plans and programs may include prevention services.

Prevention services are proactive counsellor interventions that may be described as follows:

The **primary** prevention level focuses on preventing a problem from occurring. The emphasis is on enhancing positive school climate. One example may be a school program to facilitate a safe school environment.

The **secondary** level of prevention focuses on early indicators of problems. The goal is to intervene to shorten the duration or lessen the impact of a problem. Examples may include intervening with a student at risk of not graduating, supporting students new to Manitoba, and helping a student apply conflict resolution skills.

The **tertiary** level focuses on minimizing the immediate consequences of an existing severe problem. The emphasis is on intervening to regain control over a situation so remediation and prevention strategies can be developed, implemented, and assessed. Examples may include transitional counselling and planning for a student facing suspension from school and the re-integration of the student following suspension, stabilizing a student who is suicidal, and de-escalating a student exhibiting explosive behaviour.

The whole area of prevention and preventive planning responds to a range of complexity or severity. This planning often involves consultation with others and referral to school division clinicians or external agencies. In addition to counselling skills, helpful specialized skill sets that assist in prevention planning may include

- effective communication skills
- conflict resolution
- data collection
- collaboration
- mediation
- helping others recognize professional limitations to the scope of activities of school counsellors
- helping others to solve their own problems and make informed decisions
- specialized knowledge and skills for a consultation process



Professional ethics require that school counsellors must not knowingly enter into or continue counselling a student who is receiving services from another counselling professional without first consulting with that professional.

A major focus of prevention is related to safe, caring, effective school environments. Areas related to this focus include

- classroom profiles and differentiated instruction
- effective transitional planning among Early, Middle, and Senior Years schooling
- safe schools initiatives, including bullying awareness programming, positive behaviour systems, codes of conduct, and emergency preparedness planning
- promoting diversity and inclusion in all aspects of the school community

3. Guidance Education*

School counsellors may provide direct instruction to students in areas such as peer helping, conflict resolution, social skills, career exploration, and healthy lifestyle choices. As well, school counsellors provide support to other educators in implementing personal planning, promoting positive school climates, and enhancing the emotional/social well-being of students.



See Appendix A for links between the guidance education areas of the guidance and counselling program and student learning outcomes in compulsory curricula.

School counsellors' educational role may also include

- disseminating information to students, parents**, the educational community, and other professionals
- acting as a resource for professional learning and curriculum delivery, particularly in areas related to mental health, personal safety, and sensitive issues
- speaking publicly at school and/or to community groups
- participating in professional learning

* Formerly referred to as "guidance." The term has been adjusted to more accurately reflect the activity as a teaching component.

** In this document, the terms "parent" and "parents" refer to both parents and guardians. The term "parents" is used with the recognition that in some cases only one parent may be involved in a child's education.

4. Coordination



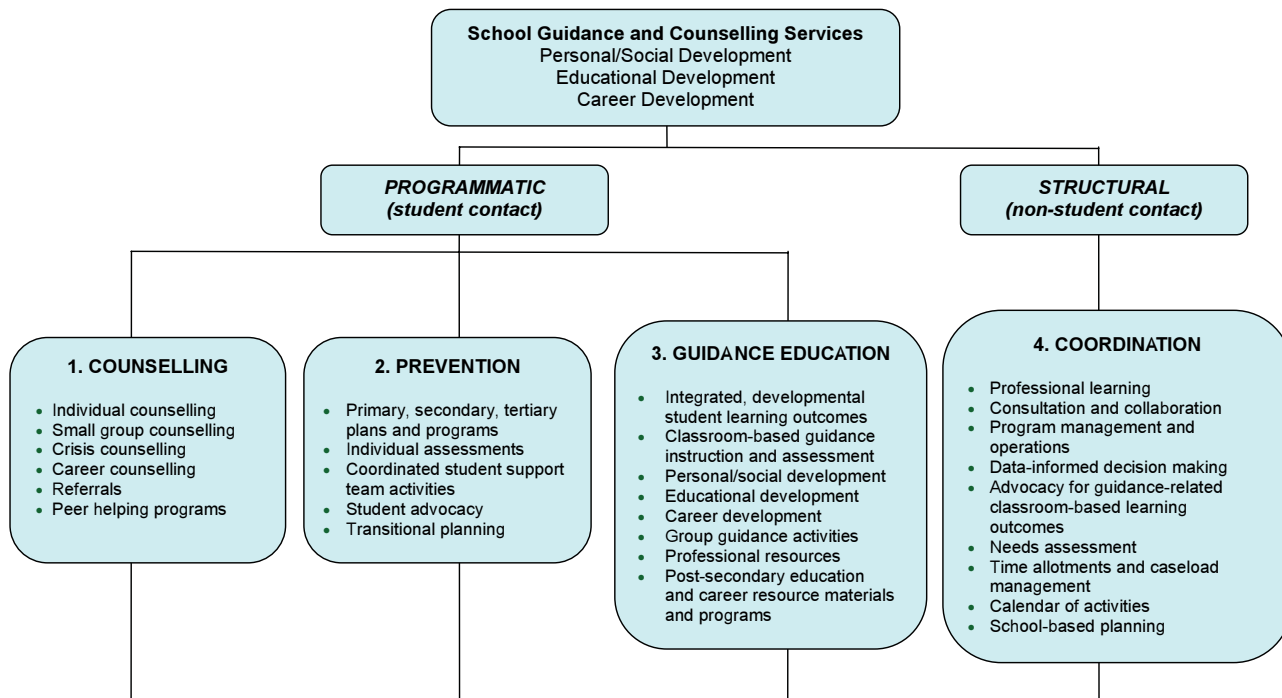
School counsellors consult and plan collaboratively with students, other educators, the school-based student services team, parents, other community agencies and external professionals.

School counsellors consult and plan collaboratively with students, other educators, the school-based student services team, parents, and other community agencies and external professionals in planning goals and effective strategies to promote the emotional, intellectual, social, academic, and career development of students. Consultation may focus on students' individual needs or on school, division, or community programs or services.

As a team member of multi-agency Circle of Care teams, the school counsellor assists in the access to and coordination of school, division, and other community services related to counselling for mental health issues. This assistance may include information gathering, referrals, and liaison between home, school, and the community. School counsellors assist students and their caregivers with transitions between grade levels, courses, and all educational facilities and programs including Early, Middle, and Senior Years schools; institutional programs; apprenticeship, technical/vocational/cooperative education programs; and post-secondary education institutions. Assisting students to make life transitions is an essential component of the planning cycle.

An overview of the types of services provided by comprehensive and developmental guidance and counselling is given below.

Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Services



School-wide Comprehensive and Developmental Guidance and Counselling

The comprehensive and developmental approach to guidance and counselling has at its foundation a universal design of preventive education that is systematic and sequential to students' learning and development. A strong foundation in prevention reduces the number of students requiring more in-depth, ongoing, or critical interventions.

A universal school-wide systemic approach supports targeted activities that include both guidance and counselling for specific issues, concerns, and topics. Intensive individual and small group counselling is reserved for students who require additional, unique, and specific interventions.

The Manitoba comprehensive and developmental model is based on the work of renowned Norman Gysbers.* There are two aspects to the model: structural and programmatic. Structural elements do not involve student contact. They are restricted to planning, monitoring, and sustainability components. It is the programmatic elements that are most visible to students, their families, and the community.

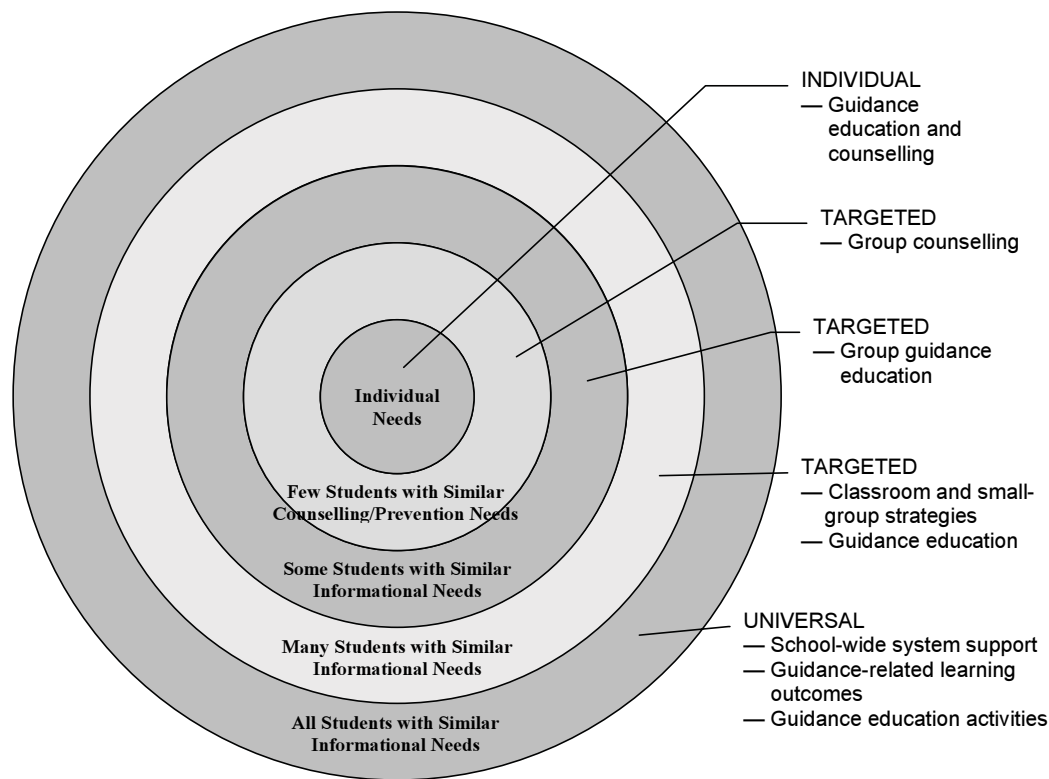
Programmatic elements include guidance education, prevention, and counselling. The figure on the next page shows a targeted approach to programming. The figure should be viewed as fluid, with seamless movement from universal guidance (information-giving) activities to preventive-responsive counselling (therapeutic) interventions as needed by specific populations at particular times.



For further information on the work on Norman Gysbers, please see Supportive Resources at the end of this section.

* In Gysbers's model (2002, 2003, 2006), the descriptive terms used are guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. For reasons of clarity in the Manitoba model, the guidance curriculum and responsive services are seen as fluid and are combined to form the "guidance education" component. Elements of Gysbers's original responsive services and guidance curriculum that are specifically focused on risk reduction are combined to form the Manitoba "prevention" component. Individual planning is contained within the "counselling" component, and system support is described as "coordination."

School-wide Guidance and Counselling Programmatic Processes



The Advantages of a Comprehensive and Developmental Approach*

Integration of guidance and counselling services into the regular, daily school experience has the following aims:

- to provide a structure to help meet the guidance and counselling needs of all students
- to encourage respect for individual strengths and needs and social and cultural diversity
- to help students understand themselves and build meaningful relationships with others
- to help students plan and achieve educational goals and explore personal career paths

* Source: Nova Scotia Education. *Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Program*. Halifax, NS: Nova Scotia Education, 2002. 3–5. Adapted with permission.

- to provide consultation and coordination services to educators, parents, administrators, and others who work with students
- to ensure the accessibility of guidance and counselling to all students
- to provide developmental as well as preventive and responsive services

Guidance and Counselling Areas of Focus



For further information on specific learning outcomes, see Chapter 5 and Appendix A.

School guidance and counselling services are focused on three distinct areas, although these areas are frequently combined to create a meaningful context within student learning activities.

Personal/Social Development

This area focuses on self-knowledge, social skills, and safety issues. These issues are aligned with the changes in human dynamics and the maturing concept of self. This area addresses issues faced by young people at each particular age and stage of development and maturity.

Educational Development

The educational area of guidance and counselling services identifies key knowledge and skills that students require over time to become effective, independent learners within and beyond the school setting.

Career Development

Early career awareness outcomes emphasize decision making and the importance of work, both to oneself and to the community. This emphasis evolves into recognizing personal attributes and preferences through career exploration and career preparation in Senior Years. From Kindergarten to Grade 12, the focus of career development is on skill development rather than on specific career preparation.

These three areas of school guidance and counselling are focal points for

- Guidance Education
- Prevention
- Counselling

These areas merge, depending on the context and level of need. For instance, when delivering services related to anger management, the school counsellor may plan some related personal/social development learning outcomes to be delivered through whole class instruction (guidance education). Additionally, small group guidance (prevention) may occur for a small group of students with particular difficulties with anger, and individual behavioural counselling (counselling) may be required for a few specific students.

Chapter Summary

- The primary goal of school guidance and counselling services is to enhance and promote student learning.
- Guidance and counselling services span Kindergarten to Grade 12. Services are provided school-wide to all students.
- A comprehensive and developmental approach to guidance and counselling services uses a team approach and is integrated into curricular learning outcomes. It is sequential and systematic.
- There are four components to a comprehensive and developmental guidance and counselling program: counselling, prevention, education, and coordination.
- The four components focus on three areas in the program: personal/social development, educational development, and career development.

Supportive Resources

Gysbers, Norman C., and Patricia Henderson. *Developing and Managing Your School Guidance Program*. 4th ed. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association, 2006.

Gysbers, Norman C., Mary J. Heppner, and Joseph A. Johnston. *Career Counseling: Process, Issues, and Techniques*. 2nd ed. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2003.

Henderson, Patricia, and Norman C. Gysbers, eds. *Implementing Comprehensive School Guidance Programs: Critical Leadership Issues and Successful Responses*. Greensboro, NC: ERIC/CASS, 2002.

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Wittmer, Joe. *Managing Your School Counseling Program: K–12 Developmental Strategies*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media Corporation, 2000.

