

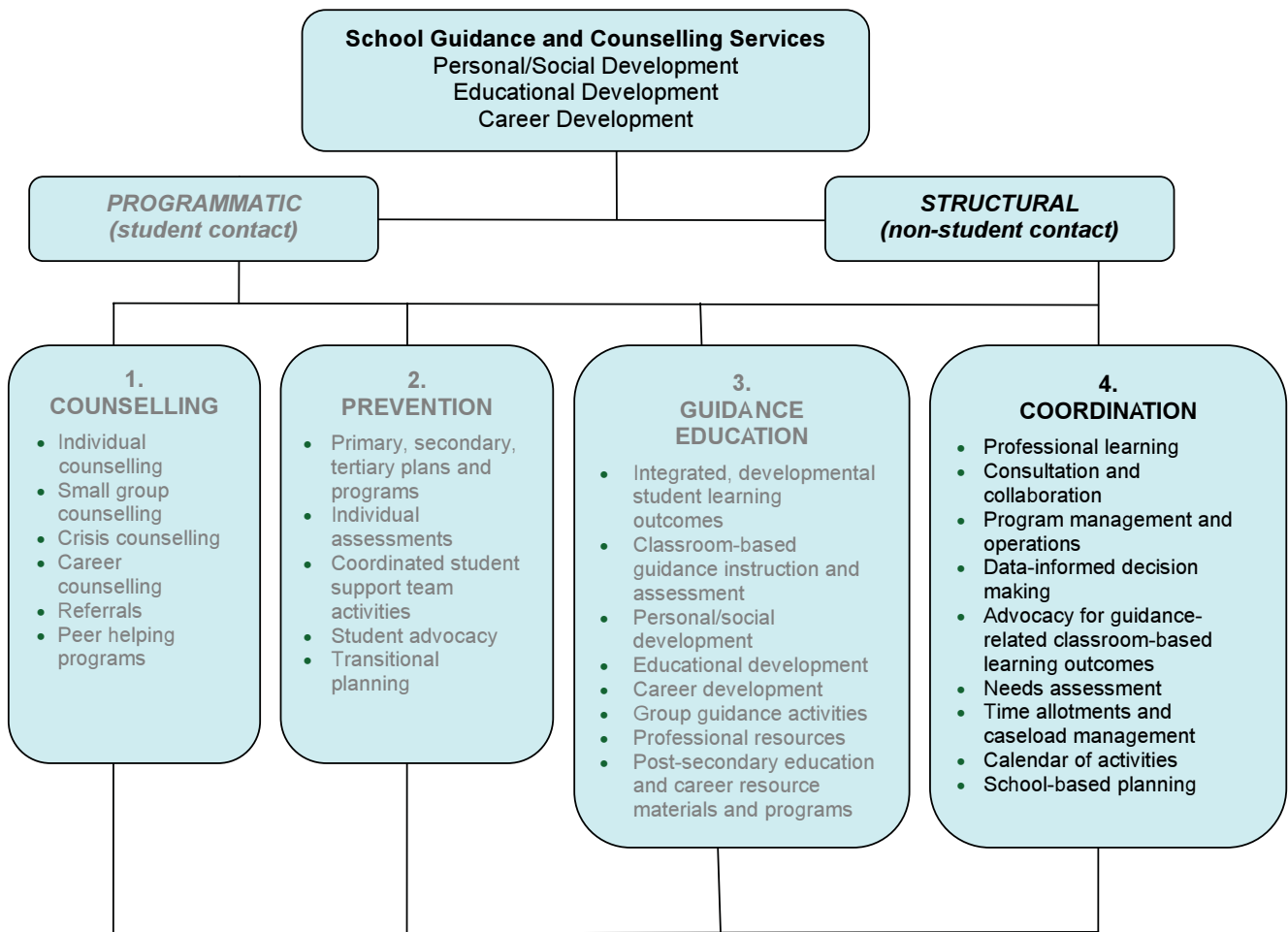
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## **Chapter 6**

### **Coordination – Component 4 of School Guidance and Counselling Services**

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## Coordination – Component 4 of School Guidance and Counselling Services

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In this chapter:

- Managing and sustaining a comprehensive and developmental program
  - Sample calendars of education and counselling activities
  - Consultation and collaboration
  - The role of needs assessments
  - Caseload management
- 

### Professional Learning

School counsellors are often involved in both providing professional learning to others through the sharing of information related to current issues in personal/social, educational, and career development, and in engaging in professional learning opportunities for themselves.

To stay current with effective counselling and teaching practices and with issues affecting children, youth, and families, it is important for school counsellors to engage in professional learning on a regular basis. One strategy is to become a member of teaching and counselling associations that provide resources and professional learning opportunities.



Please visit

- <[www.mbteach.org](http://www.mbteach.org)> for additional information on the Manitoba Teachers' Society
  - <[www.msca.mb.ca](http://www.msca.mb.ca)> for additional information on the Manitoba School Counsellors' Association
  - <[www.ccacc.ca](http://www.ccacc.ca)> for additional information on the Canadian Counselling Association
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The Manitoba Teachers' Society (MTS) and the Manitoba School Counsellors' Association (MSCA: a special area group of MTS) both offer workshops, resources, and materials that are helpful to school counsellors.

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth provides extensive resources, consultation, and professional learning opportunities for school counsellors through the Student Services Unit. The Department provides the full-time services of consultants specifically to support school counsellors in Manitoba.

Similarly, the Canadian Counselling Association (CCA) offers support to school counsellors across the country through online resources, national conferences, provincial director consultations, professional materials, and more.

## Consultation and Collaboration



### *The school counsellor*

- *is a teacher who has specific responsibilities for promoting the personal/social, educational, and career development of all students*
- *advocates, teaches, guides, counsels, consults, coordinates, and liaises with students and others in the best interest of all students*
- *plays a key leadership role in the design, implementation, and assessment of school-wide guidance and counselling services*

A comprehensive and developmental guidance and counselling program involves school counsellors working closely with their colleagues. Beginning with those components that are delivered to full classes, delivery is integrated into daily classroom lessons through

- **information sharing**—Regular classroom teachers may advise the school counsellor of their plan to deliver a guidance-related unit of study to assist the counsellor in preparing for increased student interest in specific topics.
- **support and resources**—Classroom teachers may be offered support materials, coaching, or resources by the school counsellor to assist in the planning and delivery of guidance-related lessons. Some classroom teachers may wish the counsellor to be present during part of the lesson to model the collegial nature of support and to recognize opportunities for counselling issues that may arise from the lesson.
- **team-teaching**—The school counsellor may offer to team-teach lessons that include specific learning outcomes that fit into the guidance education component of the comprehensive guidance and counselling program.
- **direct instruction**—The school counsellor may offer to teach specific lessons that are directly related to school guidance and counselling services.

To make this consultative, collaborative feature of the program truly integrated, open communication among staff members is needed. Depending on the size, training, interests, and needs of the teaching staff, the system of regular planning that fits the context of the particular school will vary from school to school. Some forms of planning meetings are:

### **Ad Hoc/Informal Meetings**

The advantage of ad hoc planning meetings is the increased flexibility and openness they offer. Together, the school counsellor and teacher(s) plan which outcomes will be addressed jointly, the amount of time devoted to the outcomes, and the expected date of instruction. These meetings may be conducted in person, using a speaker telephone, or individually through email transmissions, faxes, or telephone conversations. The disadvantage of ad hoc meetings is that during particularly busy times in schools, the meetings or conversations are the first to be forgotten and the ability of the school counsellor to be available on short notice to deliver a unit of study or single lesson may be limited.

### **Scheduled Meetings at Logical Intervals**

Pre-scheduled meetings at the beginning of a semester or term create a reliable format for considering the planning process and the amount of time required for preparation. Three meetings per school year is typically not onerous for teaching staff and individual follow-up conversations may confirm plans as the scheduled date for instruction approaches. These meetings allow all staff to reserve time appropriately for anticipated team teaching, direct delivery, or resource sharing. The disadvantage of minimal yet scheduled meetings is that in the turbulent life of school, where students may accelerate through certain units of study and get bogged down in others, it may mean the cancellation and rescheduling of group lessons that were planned several months in advance.

### **Formalized Meetings**

Meeting once a month or every two months may allow for specific planning, provide flexibility, and open conversations about unique needs that were previously unknown. The advantage of regular meetings is the continuous sharing of student information that has an impact on teaching and learning. Many schools align joint outcome meetings just prior to or following regular meeting times such as student services meetings, staff meetings, or monthly departmental meetings.

### **Focus of the Planning Meeting**

Planning meetings may be very brief. Staff members will need the following materials:

- daily planner
- calendar
- units of study/student learning outcomes

The discussion is typically about

- outcomes that require resources/support
- which outcomes are duplicated across subject areas and can be covered by the team in one area
- who will deliver the outcome(s) and during which subject area time slot
- the most appropriate time for teaching outcomes
- the length of time for outcome learning
- what type of resource/support is being requested (i.e., direct delivery, team teaching, materials)
- whether related student assessment will be conducted and how
- who will take responsibility for informing others of any changes in plan

## ***Program Management and Operations***

Managing a comprehensive and developmental guidance program requires planning, consultation, and attention to detail. Although each program will be unique to the needs of the school's population and the training and experience of the school counsellor, there are some components of management and operations that remain constant:

- budgeting
- use of facilities
- activities

### **Budget Management**

Budgeting is a consultative process. Counsellors work with principals according to school policy and procedure to discuss needs and costs. Accountability measures are taken when funds are provided, so that counsellors and their administrators know where money has been spent and what results have occurred because of the expenditure. Suggestions include the following:

- spend within the budget
- be economical
- submit receipts
- keep a record of expenditures

Determining cost effectiveness is an essential component of program management.

### **Use of Facilities**

The school counselling area is often a multi-purpose domain. In Early Years, students may engage in guidance education-related group work. Students browse for materials on specific topics of interest or concern. In Middle Years, students may sit to regain composure. In Senior Years, career searches and checking for employment opportunities are common. Sometimes students and staff use the area for studying or quiet discussion. Small group guidance sessions are common. Certainly, the school counsellor's office is used for individual education and counselling.

Because the school counselling facility is multi-functional, it is important to consider its atmosphere, its layout, and the resources available in it.

- Does the facility provide confidential and secure areas for files and individual counselling?
- Is the area quiet? welcoming? colourful? comfortable?
- Is there room to display materials and resources?
- Is there access to a Web-linked computer and career development software?
- Is the setting secure? supervised?
- Are other staff members using the facility for non-counselling purposes?

Management and smooth operation of the guidance and counselling program requires time and attention to the use of facilities. Whenever possible, it is best practice to have a relatively private area that is easily supervised. In this way, confidentiality and safety can be maintained simultaneously.

### **Activities**

The school counsellor supports many activities that take place for students, their families, and staff. Often, the school counsellor coordinates and communicates to ensure that balanced activities that include as many students as possible take place.

When the school counsellor is the lead person on a specific activity, it is important to manage the timing so that the event is helpful for students but that it does not interfere with other events taking place at the school. Communicating with staff and coordinating meetings, field trips, workshops, and counselling or education sessions support the school team approach to providing balanced instruction and opportunity. (See Consultation and Collaboration for further details.)

## ***Data-Informed Decision Making***

As schools build comprehensive school guidance and counselling services, making decisions based on the needs of each particular school is important. This section of the *Sourcebook* is based on three important assumptions:

- School counsellors, like all classroom teachers, regularly gauge their impact with students based on the combination of pre-established learning outcomes and student response.

- School counsellors, like all classroom teachers, plan their activities and make strategic professional choices based on their training and their knowledge of human development in general and the needs of individual students in particular.
- School counsellors use school-based data to make structural and guidance-related decisions. Information specific to individual needs is used to make programmatic decisions in the areas of counselling and prevention.

### Rationale for Data-Informed Decision Making

Using school-based data and feedback from needs assessments serves the following purposes (Alberta Education, 124):

- to determine students' needs for guidance and counselling programming and services
- to determine the kinds of support teachers need (e.g., consultation about individual students, communication skills for conducting effective parent conferences, interpretation of assessment data)
- to support the needs of parents (e.g., through workshops on parenting, student-focused conferences on learning and behavioural issues)
- to assist administrative decision makers in recognizing indicators of change that may require adjustments to guidance and counselling emphases and the school counsellors' responsibilities or time allotments
- to assist all educational partners in understanding the benefits of current services in combination with other services and supports provided by the school
- to provide data that supports school and school division priorities

There are many ways to gather data about the needs of a specific school community. Some examples include the following:

- informal conversations with students, parents, and staff
- structured interviews
- focus groups
- needs assessments, surveys, or questionnaires
- concept mapping
- review of student records
- examination of incident reports and types of referrals



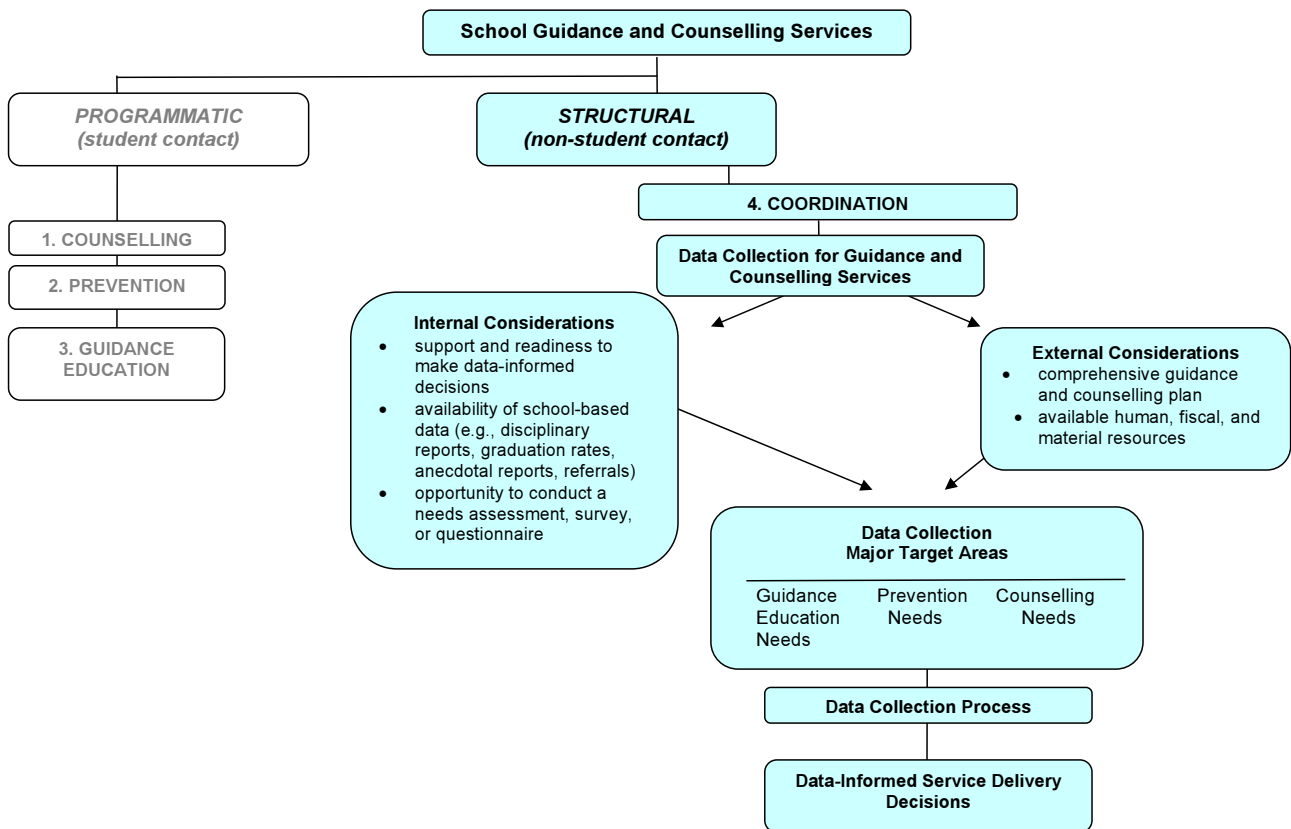
*For a sample data collection form and needs assessment, please see Appendix C.*



Using school-based data to inform comprehensive services increases efficiency and effectiveness. Thoughtful planning is needed to ensure that the services provide information and support that are relevant to defined purposes.

The figure below illustrates one method of using data to assist in making programming decisions.

**Data-Informed Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Services**



## Structural Processes\*



See Appendix C for “Sample Needs Assessment.”

### Determine Needs

School counsellors may conduct needs assessments to determine which of the comprehensive guidance and counselling outcomes ought to be system-wide, whole class, small group, or individual. The needs assessment is a major source of information for the design and direction of service delivery.

It is helpful to categorize student needs according to specific domains (personal/social, educational, career development). Some methods used to contribute to a needs assessment in a community include

- holding discussions with students, parents, and staff
- soliciting input from local groups and associations
- using surveys and questionnaires
- conducting interviews
- examining guidance and counselling program feedback
- using focus groups
- seeking input from student councils and school advisory councils

These methods align with common strategies for school-based planning and may be used in conjunction with them.

### Determine Resources

Once needs have been identified, it is important to determine what support services and available resources could meet these needs. Support services and available resources may include

- human resources (e.g., staff, community members, agencies, volunteers)
- materials resources (e.g., programs, audiovisuals, literature, computer hardware and software)
- financial support (e.g., budget, fundraising, grants)
- school division support (e.g., school board initiatives, school and school division priority areas)
- time availability (e.g., planning and evaluation, material preparation, and research)

\* Source: Nova Scotia Education. *Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Program*. Student Services Series. Halifax, NS: Nova Scotia Education, April 2002. 10–12. Adapted with permission.

- community resources (e.g., availability and accessibility of programs and services)
- school facilities (e.g., access to appropriate rooms for teaching, meeting, and counselling activities)

### Identify Student Outcomes

Clearly identified student outcomes support the program and its integration into regular school life. The outcomes may be described, monitored, assessed, and improved over a period of time.

The process of identifying the student learning outcomes promotes

- increased awareness of the outcomes of different curriculum areas
- increased awareness by classroom teachers of methods to foster outcomes that are part of guidance and counselling services
- integration of the guidance education component into programming for specific subject areas
- a measurable, observable demonstration that the outcomes are being achieved.

### Define Service Delivery Activities

Student needs are met by designing specific activities. The design of these activities typically determines the degree to which student outcomes are achieved. Some important design questions to be answered follow:

- How does the activity address specific student needs?
- Who will participate in the activity (individuals, small group, large group)?
- Who is in the best position to design a specific activity (school counsellor, classroom teacher, parent, student, other professional)?
- Does the activity have different impacts on different groups of students?
- How long will the activity take?
- What resources are needed?
- How will the expected student outcomes be evaluated?



See Appendix C for “Sample School Counsellor Activities.”

### Implement Services by Using Data

Once the guidance and counselling activities have been defined, implementation will take place. The time frame will vary from school to school, with some activities being immediate and short term and others requiring a much longer period. This is a critical stage when making decisions about providing services, as it is the local needs of the school that will be most directly addressed.

## ***Time Allotments and Caseload Management\****

School counsellors organize and coordinate their services as an integral component of the system-wide, universal approach. Ideally, school guidance and counselling services are designed to foster support from both within and beyond the school community to meet the developmental needs of students. Counsellors establish services to address student needs that may be achievable through a variety of means, including curriculum activities, small group and/or individual counselling, student support teamwork, referrals, and consultation.

To provide a continuum of prevention and intervention services, it is important for school counsellors to organize their time to effectively provide such services. Scheduling and establishing priorities should result in enhanced student learning and success. Results from classroom profiles and from thorough needs assessments provide good data for planning.

The schedules of school counsellors are influenced by a number of factors:

- priorities established by the particular needs of the school
- addressing unexpected student needs such as a crisis
- developmental needs of all students
- school team coordination
- need for consultation with teachers, other professionals, and parents/guardians
- administrative responsibilities related to guidance and counselling services

Since full-time school counsellors generally have more flexibility than full-time classroom teachers in scheduling their time, it is important for them to coordinate their schedules with other members of the school team so that their services and activities complement one another. This allows the counsellor to accomplish a number of valuable results:

- to establish times for individual counselling
- to arrange for small group counselling
- to consult with classroom teachers and/or implement parts of the curriculum

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\* Source: Prince Edward Island Department of Education. Student Services Division. *School Counselling Services: Standards and Guidelines, Handbook for School Counsellors*. Charlottetown, PEI: Prince Edward Island Department of Education, June 2005. 12–13. Adapted with permission.

- to gain the support and cooperation of fellow educators
- to contribute to student support teams
- to consult with external agencies and make appropriate referrals

The figure below shows approximate time allotments as a guideline for full-time counsellors striving for balanced services.

#### Sample Time Management Plan\*

DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL COUNSELLOR TIME			
	EARLY YEARS	MIDDLE YEARS	SENIOR YEARS
Guidance Education	30 – 40%	20 – 30%	15 – 25%
Prevention	5 – 10%	15 – 25%	25 – 35%
Counselling	30 – 40%	30 – 40%	30 – 40%
Coordination	15 – 20%	15 – 20%	15 – 20%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

The overall objective is for school counsellors to analyze their time over the course of a full school year to determine whether they are using it effectively to meet the identified goals and outcomes of the counselling services of each particular school.

## Calendar of Activities

Maintaining a calendar of activities provides structure and coherence to school guidance and counselling services, while simultaneously offering students, staff, and the community an opportunity to see the variety of supports available at the school through the school counsellor.

A calendar of activities also assists progress toward meeting the goals identified through a needs assessment. When the activities in the calendar are added to daily events such as individual counselling, small group counselling, and classroom instruction (guidance education), the need for identifying time allotments and caseload management are more evident.

\* Based on recommendations by Norman C. Gysbers and Patricia Henderson, CCA National Conference (Montreal, 2006).

Many schools post the school counsellor’s calendar of activities on the school website. It is also often included in student handbooks and newsletters.

Below are three samples of typical school counsellors’ calendars of activities. Remember, the items listed in the calendar are in addition to the daily activities of school counsellors and are based on a full-time schedule.

**EARLY YEARS CALENDAR OF EVENTS Sample**

<p><b>SEPTEMBER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake interviews with newly enrolled students and their parents</li> <li>• Orientation sessions/Welcome Fair for Kindergarten students and their parents</li> <li>• Orientation sessions for new students</li> <li>• Classroom visitations to introduce counsellor to all students</li> <li>• Distribution of comprehensive and developmental guidance and counselling services pamphlet</li> <li>• Student Services meeting for students requiring team support</li> </ul> <p><b>OCTOBER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict Manager training session</li> <li>• Personal Safety classroom sessions</li> <li>• Open House—parents’ introduction to guidance and counselling services</li> <li>• Student Services meeting for students requiring team support</li> <li>• Class review meetings</li> </ul> <p><b>NOVEMBER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullying Awareness Week school-wide activities</li> <li>• Manitoba Addictions Awareness Week school-wide activities</li> <li>• Student Services meeting for students requiring team support</li> </ul> <p><b>DECEMBER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship workshops</li> <li>• Student Services meeting for students requiring team support</li> </ul>	<p><b>JANUARY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Services meeting for students requiring team support</li> </ul> <p><b>FEBRUARY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Services meeting for students requiring team support</li> <li>• Class review meetings</li> </ul> <p><b>MARCH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Services meeting for students requiring team support</li> </ul> <p><b>APRIL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Information Night on Middle Years optional course selection process</li> <li>• Student Services meeting for students requiring team support</li> </ul> <p><b>MAY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student support team meeting for transferring files, transitional planning</li> <li>• Student Services meeting for students requiring team support</li> </ul> <p><b>JUNE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitations from Middle Years School Counsellor re: transition to new school</li> <li>• Transitional meetings for transfer of files to Middle Years school</li> </ul>
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### MIDDLE YEARS CALENDAR OF EVENTS Sample

#### SEPTEMBER

- Intake interviews with newly enrolled students
- Orientation sessions for new students
- Classroom visitations to introduce counsellor to all students
- Distribution of comprehensive and developmental guidance and counselling services pamphlet
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

#### OCTOBER

- Conflict manager training session
- Open House—parents' introduction to guidance and counselling services
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support
- Class review meetings

#### NOVEMBER

- Bullying Awareness Week school-wide activities
- Manitoba Addictions Awareness Week school-wide activities
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

#### DECEMBER

- Study skills workshops
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

#### JANUARY

- Individual counselling for students in academic difficulty
- Smoking Awareness Week activities
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

#### FEBRUARY

- Visitations from Senior Years school counsellor re: course selections
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support
- Class review meetings

#### MARCH

- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

#### APRIL

- Parent Information Night on Senior Years course selection process and graduation requirements
- Individual counselling for students in academic difficulty
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

#### MAY

- Student support team meeting for transferring files, transitional planning
- Study skills workshops
- Mental Health Week activities
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

#### JUNE

- Grade 8 graduation final preparations and awards nominations
- Summer school applications
- Transitional meetings for transfer of files to Senior Years school

## SENIOR YEARS CALENDAR OF EVENTS Sample

### SEPTEMBER

- Intake interviews with newly enrolled students
- Orientation sessions for new students
- Classroom visitations to introduce counsellor to all students
- Distribution of comprehensive and developmental guidance and counselling services pamphlet
- Course changes
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

### OCTOBER

- Peer helper retreat
- Peer tutor training session
- Open House—parents' introduction to guidance and counselling services
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

### NOVEMBER

- Take Our Kids to Work Day
- Bullying Awareness Week school-wide activities
- Manitoba Addictions Awareness Week school-wide activities
- Grade 12 students' preparation for advanced early registration for post-secondary studies
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support
- University and College Information Fair

### DECEMBER

- Grade 12 students' preparation for early registration for post-secondary studies
- Study skills workshops
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

### JANUARY

- Individual counselling for students in academic difficulty
- Course changes

- Smoking Awareness Week activities
- Student Services Meeting for students requiring team support

### FEBRUARY

- Universities, Colleges, and Apprenticeship Information Days
- Visit Middle Years school Grade 8 classes re: course selections
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

### MARCH

- Career Symposium activities
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

### APRIL

- Parent Information Night on post-secondary studies
- Grade 12 students' preparation for registration for post-secondary studies, student awards, and financial aid
- Work Fair
- Resumé writing and interviewing workshops
- Individual counselling for students in academic difficulty
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

### MAY

- Student support team meeting for transferring files, transitional planning
- Study skills workshops
- Mental Health Week activities
- Student Services meeting for students requiring team support

### JUNE

- Grade 12 graduation final preparations and awards nominations
- Summer school applications
- Graduation



### National Awareness Promotions

**September**

AIDS Walk Week (Walk for Life)  
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) Awareness Day

**October**

Autism Month  
Breast Cancer Awareness Month  
Learning Disabilities Month  
International Walk to School Week  
Mental Illness Awareness Week  
Fire Prevention Week  
National School Safety Week  
World Mental Health Day  
International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

**November**

Take Our Kids to Work Day  
Bullying Awareness Week  
National Addictions Awareness Week  
CPR Awareness Month  
National Down Syndrome Awareness Week  
Day of Tolerance  
Universal Children's Day/National Child Day  
International Day for the Elimination of Violence  
Against Women

**December**

World AIDS Day  
International Day of Disabled Persons  
National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence  
Against Women in Canada  
Human Rights Day

**January**

National Non-smoking Week

**February**

Eating Disorders Awareness Week  
Sexual and Reproductive Health Awareness Day

**March**

Brain Awareness Week  
Career Symposium  
School Counsellors' Appreciation Week

**April**

Cancer Awareness Month  
Dental Health Month  
National Volunteer Week  
World Health Day  
Equality Day  
Earth Day

**May**

Speech and Hearing Awareness Month  
National Mental Health Week  
Emergency Preparedness Week  
Aboriginal Awareness Week  
National Missing Children Day  
Schizophrenia Day (Walk the World)  
World No Tobacco Day

**June**

Relay for Life  
National Cancer Survivors Day  
World Environment Day  
National Aboriginal Day  
International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit  
Trafficking

## School-Based Planning for Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling



For further information on planning see:

- Supporting Inclusive Schools: School-Based Planning and Reporting: A Framework for Developing and Implementing Annual School Plans and Reports
  - Towards Inclusion: From Challenges to Possibilities: Planning for Behaviour
- 

Guidance and counselling priorities may be included in annual school division and school plans, based on results from needs assessments. Effective planning includes programs and activities that are based on the needs of students and that result in positive student outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the areas of personal/social, educational, and career development. A balanced plan includes consideration of both programmatic and structural elements.

A team approach to planning encourages consideration of issues of diversity and inclusion. These issues have an impact on a range of programs and services and assist schools in addressing the diverse needs of all students.

The process of planning involves key stakeholders, including students, school staff, families, and the community, in a meaningful way and may include the following:

- a statement of vision and mission
- identification of priorities or key target areas
- statements of expected outcomes
- strategies and activities to achieve the outcomes
- measurable indicators of success (strategies for evaluating the effectiveness of activities)

Special consideration in planning may be given to the role of guidance and counselling in supporting and contributing to provincial priorities for Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth and school-planning priorities.

## Chapter Summary

- It is important for school counsellors to keep current on issues and effective practices in addressing the personal/social, educational, and career development needs of students, and to be involved in ongoing professional learning activities.
- Program management and operations include maintaining a budget, effective use of facilities, and design of supportive activities based on the particular needs of the school's population.
- Maintaining a calendar of activities assists the school and community in understanding the role and function of the school counsellor. It also has the benefit of assisting in the counsellor's goal setting for the year.
- Ongoing consultation and collaboration allow for the comprehensive guidance and counselling services to be infused into the daily events of the school. They also allow for team planning and monitoring of student progress.
- A needs assessment assists in planning for service delivery that specifically meets the needs of the school community. It assists the counsellor in determining resources and deciding on the most effective strategies for providing services.
- Monitoring time allotments and caseload management is important to recognizing the internal and external considerations that have an impact on programming.

## Supportive Resources

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. *Supporting Inclusive Schools: School-Based Planning and Reporting: A Framework for Developing and Implementing Annual School Plans and Reports*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2004. Available online at <[www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/school-based/](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/school-based/)>.

