

# Chapter 1

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## FROM GUIDANCE WORKER TO PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELOR



### CACREP OUTCOME FOUNDATIONS

#### A. *Knowledge*

1. Knows history, philosophy, and trends in school counseling and educational systems.
4. Knows professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials that are relevant to the practice of school counseling.

#### B. *Skills and Practices*

2. Demonstrates the ability to articulate, model, and advocate for an appropriate school counselor identity and program.

### COUNSELING, PREVENTION, AND INTERVENTION

#### D. *Skills and Practices*

1. Demonstrates self-awareness, sensitivity to others, and the skills needed to relate to diverse individuals, groups, and classrooms.
5. Demonstrates the ability to recognize his or her limitations as a school counselor and to seek supervision or refer clients when appropriate.

Counseling reached its “adolescence” in the early 1960s and achieved a central perspective and direction. . . . The counseling profession is now being deluged by numerous forces calling for a more mature response than in an adolescent period . . . the central issue for the counseling profession today—that is, how do we best maintain hard-fought gains while moving further up the ladder of development? (Aubrey, 1983 p. 78.)

**T**he profession of school counseling is one that has a relatively short history compared to many other occupations. It is also one that is often misunderstood, despite the American School Counselor Association’s (ASCA) efforts to define and advocate for the profession of school counseling. The ASCA (n.d.) states, “Professional school counselors have a minimum of a master’s degree in school counseling, meet the state certification/licensure standards, and abide by the laws of the states in which they are employed” (para. 2).

Yet we come in contact with individuals known as “credit counselors” and “weight loss counselors”; there is even a “car counselor” talk show that I recently listened to on the radio. Although these various occupations are important, many of these occupations do not require a college degree. The education and training of licensed professional counselors, and more specifically school counselors, may appear to be diluted by the use of the term ‘counselor’ for these other occupations. To assist in thinking about your career as a school counselor, complete Conceptual Application Exercise 1.1.

### CONCEPTUAL APPLICATION EXERCISE 1.1

1. When you think of the school counselor you had when you were in school, what were some of the tasks this professional performed? What were some of the activities that your elementary school counselor performed? Middle school counselor? High school counselor?
2. Interview three different people and ask them how they would describe the role of the school counselor. Share your responses with your classmates.

No doubt, you have received different opinions from each of the individuals you interviewed from the activity above. From these responses, are you able to explain the reasons that the school counselor is such a difficult profession to describe? Do these responses give you any insight as to how the profession evolved from its inception in the early part of the twentieth century to where it is

today? In the section below, read how guidance workers evolved into what are now known as *professional school counselors*. Note the historical trends that have influenced this profession and the tasks our predecessors assumed compared with the tasks that school counselors perform today. Vocational trends, individual and group counseling, testing, accountability, organizational structure, credentialing, and the formation of our school counseling professional organization, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), are trends that have impacted our profession. These are discussed in the next section to assist in your understanding of how the profession has grown to what it is today. A summary of state school counseling programs and models, national and state credentials and requirements, counselor identity, and characteristics of successful school counselors are included, followed by predictions for the school counseling profession.

### BOX 1.1 REFLECTIONS FROM THE PROFESSION

Counselors were asked to give their answers to what they believe is the most important part of their role as a school counselor. Answers include:

- Relationships, relationships, relationships. I believe showing students, families, and school staff my desire to help and encourage students every day is the basis of my job, which I love more and more the older I get! Sharon Earley, elementary school counselor
- The most important thing about my role as a school counselor is that I have the opportunity to make a difference in a child's life every day. Even though I may never know if I have had an impact, I realize that for some children, I am an important resource that is absent in every other area of his or her life. Betty Anne Domm
- Relationship with the kids. It's the foundation for all of the advocacy, change, and support I can offer them or the larger school community. Helping kids grow starts at knowing who they are; even the most resistant parent or teacher can tell the difference between "doing my job" and genuinely, honestly knowing his/her child and trying to give the student the best you can offer. Amy Marshall



## A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Industrial Revolution is credited as the catalyst behind the school counseling profession. About 1890, the United States shifted from a rural to an urban society. Factories were built and families moved to urban areas for the new

occupations that were created (Herr, 2001), with a large number of immigrants entering our nation in search of better opportunities. With the rapid proliferation of industries, occupations emerged that had never existed before, which created a need to prepare workers for a changing, uncertain workplace. Yet adverse social circumstances accompanied industrialization, such as indentured child servitude and child labor. It was not uncommon for children to work 12–14 hours a day under dangerous, deplorable conditions and subjected to harsh forms of punishment by their employers. Many reformists lobbied for the abolishment of child labor, but regardless of these efforts employers preferred to hire child laborers because they were more manageable and cheaper. Some parents supported child labor because they believed this form of work built character and a work ethic, not to mention the income their children brought home (Solomon-McCarthy, 2012).



**Photo 1.1** Children During the Industrial Revolution

*Source:* © duncan1890/iStockphoto.com

## Vocational Guidance

In the early 1900s compulsory education laws were passed that took youth out of factories, off the streets, and put them into the educational setting (Katz, 1976). Teachers were unprepared for this influx of students who were far different from those they had taught in previous years. There was also recognition that students needed to be prepared for the wide range of occupations which were rapidly emerging. In response, teachers were given the task of fulfilling a role of “guidance worker,” a role that included a list of duties for which the teachers received no training, no additional pay, and no relief from regular classroom duties (Gysbers, 2001).

At this time Meyer Bloomfield, a leader in the vocational guidance movement, concerned that no one was guiding and evaluating students as they transitioned to work, advised students and their parents to give thought to future careers. In addition, he recognized the importance of providing occupational information to teachers who agreed to assist students with their vocational development. Therefore, 117 teachers were trained in vocational guidance techniques (Free Online Library, n.d.) but were still expected to perform their regular teaching obligations.

With various political, economic, and social issues emerging, different perspectives regarding the term “guidance” surfaced with a variety of questions. Was guidance in schools a way to prepare and assist students with educational and vocational decisions? For vocational selection? Or should guidance address concerns in all aspects of life? (Gysbers, 2001).

Jesse B. Davis is regarded as being America’s first school counselor, due to his implementation of a systematic guidance program in Grand Rapids, Michigan (Pope, 2009) in the early 1900s. Davis infused guidance lessons on such topics as interpersonal communication, character development, and vocational interests into the English curriculum. Interestingly, when Davis was asked to present his work at a conference, he was “ruled out of order at first when he began to tell of using English classes for guidance. Apparently few had envisioned the possibilities through curriculum studies” (Brewer, 1942, p. 139, as cited in Pope, 2009; Zytowski, 2001). Others supported this vision and approach. As stated in the *New York Times* (1912), “The demand for a practical course of moral instruction in the public schools, and particularly in the high school, has been urgent for many years” (para. 13).

Eli Weaver and Anna Y. Reed were also instrumental in infusing guidance into the school curriculum. Weaver believed that students needed advice and guidance before entering the workforce. As a part of the work experience, he organized guidance services for boys in New York City by placing these city boys on farms to work during the summer months. Anna Reed believed that

since business personnel were successful, schools should emphasize the money making potential of entering business, a concept to which she believed students would be able to relate.

Despite the efforts of these early pioneers, Frank Parsons is regarded as the “father of vocational guidance” (Zytowski, 2001). Parsons was concerned about people entering the workforce without adequate training and was a firm believer that schools needed to teach more than academics.

### BOX 1.2 BIOGRAPHY OF FRANK PARSONS

Frank Parsons was born in 1854, in Mount Holly, New Jersey, entering Cornell University at the age of 16. He became a civil engineer and later worked as a laborer for a mill. After this, he taught and supervised an art program (Davis, 1969, as cited in Gummere, 1988). From there, he went to law school, where he crammed three years of law classes into one year of study. This experience resulted in illness and damaged eyes, and to recover he spent 3 years in New Mexico. After his recovery he practiced law in Boston but did not enjoy it. He turned to writing, and one of his best known books, *Choosing a Vocation*, was posthumously published. In this book he describes a career decision-making model that includes three steps:

- Self-understanding of aptitudes, skills, and interests
- Knowledge of requirements for different types of work
- Congruence of self-understanding and work requirements for job satisfaction (true reasoning)

During the early 1920s, there was a greater emphasis on educational guidance with less attention to vocational guidance. As stated by Brewer (1918, as cited in Gysbers, 2001), educational guidance was anything that “had to do with instruction or with learning . . . as a conscious effort to assist in the intellectual growth of an individual.” The Great Depression in the 1930s meant a scarcity of funds for guidance programs regardless of focus.

In 1946 the Vocational Education Act (also known as the George-Barden Act) and the passage of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in 1958 played important roles in highlighting the vocational aspect of guidance. The George-Barden Act provided funding for the selection and training of individuals to maintain a vocational guidance program (Barrett, 1948) and was amended in 1963 to provide greater flexibility in vocational programs.

In 1957, the launching of the Russian satellite Sputnik sparked public attention and outrage, due to the perception that the USSR had surpassed the U.S. in

the race for space. This event promoted a view that more “guidance counselors” were needed to identify and direct gifted students into the math and science fields. Federal monies were allocated to employ secondary school counselors to select outstanding students for these areas, so the United States could become more competitive (Herr, 2001). Teachers who were assuming guidance service positions were given training during the summer months and through year-long institutes (Gysbers, 2004; Herr, 2001) to learn how to guide students skilled in science and math.

In 1984, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act expanded career guidance and counseling programs so all students, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or handicapping conditions could develop skills in an identified occupation (Herr, 2001). This law was reauthorized in 1998 and again in 2006, with the intent of providing workers with skills that did not require an advanced degree. It was renamed the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006.

The National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) of 1989 significantly impacted career guidance efforts in all schools (Herr, 2001). This federal interagency committee was designed to 1) facilitate communication between developers of occupational information; 2) help states meet the needs for vocational information; and 3) ease career decision making (Teacher’s Guide to the U.S. Dept. of Education, 2000). The funding from this initiative assisted in the development of the career programs DISCOVER and SIGI Career Exploration.

In 1994, the School to Work Opportunities Act further addressed comprehensive guidance programs by passing legislation that assisted individuals in making and implementing occupational choices (Herr, 2001). This legislation provided students with the opportunity to seamlessly transition from secondary school to career, or to post secondary options. In addition, this legislation mandated that career awareness, exploration, and counseling were to begin as early as possible but no later than the seventh grade, with initial career selection to begin no later than the eleventh grade. Each of these enterprises served as forerunners to today’s focus on the STEM careers, an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

### **BOX 1.3 STEM SCHOOLS**

Stem-focused schools were first developed to target students that excelled in the science and engineering occupations, so our youth would keep the United States as a leading nation in these areas. In 2009, the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA) reported that U.S. high school students ranked eighteenth in math and thirteenth in science compared to 34 other industrialized countries, with some of



the higher ranked nations being much smaller with less wealth than the United States. Like the Sputnik incident, this report was a wake-up call, in that if our nation wanted to remain competitive, stronger educational efforts were needed in the areas of math, science, and technology. President Barack Obama stated, “The single most important determinant of how we do economically is going to be the skills of our workforce . . . . We used to be at the top of the heap when it came to math and science education; we are now 21st and 25th, respectively, in science and math” (Schram, 2013, B3). Identifying and enrolling gifted Hispanic and African American students who are underrepresented in these areas is a recent focus of this effort (Robeien, 2011).

Vocational concerns have obviously been the drive behind the school counseling profession, but even with this trend there were continued debates about the meaning of the term “guidance” and how it was to be delivered to students. In fact, it wasn’t until 1931 that the term “counseling” was first used particularly with attention to the mental health concerns of students. This change of focus was partly due to mental health and progressive education that brought about a greater awareness of troubled youth (Gysbers, 2001) and the need for a new set of skills in the form of individual and group counseling.

### **Individual and Group Counseling**

In the early 1900s, both Sigmund Freud and John Dewey generated an awareness of how mental health issues influenced the academic, personal, social, and moral growth of students. Guidance was seen as “problems of adjustment to health, religion, recreation, to family and friends, to school and to work” (Campbell, 1932, p. 4, as cited in Gysbers, 2001). Some argued that it was the vocational “guidance worker” who was responsible for the mental health of students, yet not everyone agreed guidance workers should assist with the emotional and moral concerns of youth (Gysbers, 2001).

E.G. Williamson (1900–1979) is one of the first individuals to emphasize the importance of a transition in the counseling profession from one that emphasized vocational development to one that focused on individual counseling. His theory, developed in the 1930s, largely borrowed from the work of Frank Parsons, outlined a six-step prescriptive model that included:

1. Analysis—gathering data about student
2. Synthesis—selecting information to better understand the student
3. Diagnosis—forming an initial hypothesis about the student’s needs



4. Prognosis—problem-solving to determine an outcome
5. Treatment—identifying interventions to meet the outcome
6. Follow-up—evaluating how well the intervention worked

This directive approach, known as the Minnesota Model due to Williamson's work at the University of Minnesota (Neukrug, n.d.), was criticized due to its structured problem-solving approach, but was influential in that it created a framework for counselors to use when working with students and their individual concerns.

In contrast to Williamson's directive approach, Carl Rogers (1902–1987) influenced the counseling profession with his humanistic, indirect counseling theory. In his book *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, Rogers espoused a person-centered counseling which was contrary to the prevailing direct style of counseling. He believed that self-concept, or consistent beliefs and interpretation about oneself as a result of our life experiences, are facilitated when the core conditions of a counseling relationship exist.



**Photo 1.2** E.G. Williamson in His Office at the University of Minnesota

*Source:* Image Courtesy of the University of Minnesota Archives, University of Minnesota—Twin Cities

Political and social upheaval in the 1960s brought renewed attention to personal/social issues, but because the guidance worker was laden with so many duties resembling those of an administrator, little counseling to address these concerns occurred (Gysbers, 2001). With the passage of Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94–142) in 1975, the needs of students with special needs was highlighted, and with it the school counselor’s role in assisting these students and their parents/guardians. With the school demographics continually changing, instruments with the capabilities to assess individual traits, abilities, and vocational interests appeared, and school counselors were given the additional task of testing and assessment.

### **Testing and Assessment**

Due to the work of Albert Binet who developed the first intelligence test in 1905, educators began to see the benefits of tests as tools for assessing an individual’s interests, abilities, and deficiencies. One of these tests, the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), formerly known as the Alpha and Beta Test, was developed during World War I to identify military jobs for which enlisted military would be best suited, and to determine candidates for leadership positions (ASVAB, n.d). As interest and aptitude tests expanded, the school counselor assumed a major role in administering and interpreting many of these tests. Counselor assessment and evaluation competencies are supported by ASCA and include knowledge and skills such as choosing assessment strategies and instruments, administering and interpreting test results, and using these results for decision making. Mandated testing and high-stakes testing are primary means for assessing student growth (Duffy, Giordano, Farrell, Paneque, & Crump, 2008).

Yet as indicated in the ASCA position statement on high stakes tests, “professional school counselors advocate for the use of multiple criteria when educational decisions are made about student performance and oppose the use of a single test to make important educational decisions affecting students and their schools” (ASCA, 2007, para. 1). Unfortunately, with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation of 2001 that requires assessments in reading/language arts, math, and science, many school counselors are assigned the role of “test coordinator.” In fact, 80% of elementary school counselors reported that they were in charge of standardized testing in the district, and another 10% reported that they assisted with the testing procedures (Thorn & Mulvenon, 2002). This task requires an enormous amount of coordination and planning, takes time away from directly assisting students, and contributes to a tremendous amount of student, parent/guardian, and teacher stress. The poem in Box 1.4 was written by a counselor to express her views on the No Child Left Behind Law.

**BOX 1.4 NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND?**

No Child Left Behind, now in effect for 12 long years.  
 Trying, often failing, to equate students with their peers.  
 Teachers teaching to the test, ignoring other factors,  
 Counselors forced to jump on board, despite public detractors.  
 Academic reigns supreme as career falls to the side,  
 Personal/Social? No one cares, as long as scores are high.  
 You haven't eaten? No big deal. We expect you to perform.  
 You're being bullied? Get over it. For some kids, that's the norm.  
 Leave education to the teachers, or soon, we'll likely find,  
 Those students with no counselors will be the ones we left behind.

—Brittany Pollard

Throughout our history “guidance workers” were involved with numerous tasks and many continued to perform tasks that resembled those of a quasi-administrator. With a reduction in funding and difficult decisions regarding faculty and staff reductions, questions were raised as to how guidance activities could be evaluated to concretely demonstrate that outcomes were occurring as “guidance counselors” claimed (Gysbers, 2004).

**Accountability**

In partial response to the question as to how school counselors contributed to the academic mission as early as the 1930s, standards were created that measured the number of activities which were performed, the amount of time devoted to each activity, and the quality and consistency of the work (Myers, 1926, as cited in Gysbers, 2004). This emphasis continued in the 1940s with a focus on appropriate evaluative criteria that corresponded to the training and education of school counselors.

Throughout the next decades accountability efforts continued. During the 1960s a newsletter entitled *Guidance Counseling and Testing Program Evaluation* was prepared for the U.S. Office of Education that renewed the emphasis on outcome standards for students involved in a guidance and counseling program (Gysbers, 2004). During the 1970s the debate surrounding the efficacy of “guidance counselors” intensified, with pressure for these professionals to concretely document student outcomes using tangible methods (Gysbers, 2004). As

insistence on providing documentation of service effectiveness continued, some individuals questioned whether or not school counselors could actually reveal how their interventions contributed to positive outcomes for students in preK–12 grades. Pressure to show program and performance effectiveness continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and despite the range of social problems such as child abuse, child-rearing problems, and divorce, decision-makers needed to reduce costs. School counseling was one area in which there were budget cuts, due to the lack of information regarding how these professionals contributed to student growth (Gysbers, 2004), and the numbers of students who were not receiving the urgently needed guidance assistance (Herr, 2001).

In 1994 Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was reauthorized and Goals 2000: Educate America Act (P.L. 103–227) was passed to support the development and implementation of standards-based educational reform at a national level (Superfine, 2005). By 1999 Goals 2000 was replaced by No Child Left Behind (NCLB), highlighting standards, assessment, and accountability systems in which “high-stakes” conditions were created. Furthermore, states were required to hold schools accountable for their performance on student assessments (Superfine, 2005). At the present time, there are many questions as to the practicality of this act, and there is some discussion that this legislation could be amended to give states more control.

Throughout these decades, the perception of the role of the “guidance worker” (now professional school counselor) differed depending on the person who was asked the question. Educational reform issues primarily have ignored guidance programs, partly due to guidance and counseling being considered as a separate entity from the academic mission. School “guidance counselors” were partially to blame for this omission because they had not advocated for themselves, did not partner with teachers, and tended to stay in their offices making themselves invisible to others (Aubrey, 1985). As an answer to these concerns, various guidance structures were proposed to standardize the role and position of the school counselor. In addition, credentialing and the formation of the ASCA contributed to school counselor identity by providing direction for state requirements and education.

## **Guidance Organizational Structure**

A lack of an organized structure contributed to task differences among teachers who assumed the “guidance worker” position. Some believed that a centralized structure would help in standardizing duties, which would make the role of this professional more clearly understood. Therefore, throughout the 1930s the mental health movement dominated counselor practice with a clinical model of “guidance” that focused on the social and emotional needs of youth (Gysbers, 2001). In

the 1930s and 1940s a pupil personnel format was proposed in which various educational practitioners such as attendance officers, school nurses, visiting teachers, school physicians, and “guidance workers” were organized into a structure of personnel who did not fit into any other organization. This solution was intended to maximize the services provided to students, but despite expectations for this organizational structure, guidance continued to be misunderstood and misinterpreted (Gysbers, 2001). To address this concern, a focus on student outcomes such as increased academic achievement, fewer disciplinary cases, fewer absences, better study habits, and so on were considered as necessary student outcomes (Gysbers, 2004) to achieve measurable results.

The pupil personnel services continued to be the organizational structure with “student services” as the more popular term (Gysbers, 2001), and “guidance counselors” took on a remedial connotation rather than one that was preventive and student-oriented. When the NDEA was passed in 1958, more and more full-time school counselors entered schools. School counselors continued with a service oriented structure known as the *nine dimensions of guidance*, with a focus on the areas in which school counselors were trained, ranging from orientation, student appraisal, counseling, information, placement, and follow-up services, regardless of the type of program that was in place. The need for better evaluation standards to assess how well guidance services are performed continued and persists today (Gysbers, 2004).

By the 1970s, there was debate as to whether the student services model was the best approach for confronting the numerous issues within educational arenas. Different program models were proposed and implemented. Myrick developed a competency-based guidance program in the 1970s and 1980s that identified student competencies associated with student success (Gysbers, 2001). Gysbers and Moore proposed a similar organizational structure with competencies, resources, and program components that included the guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support (Gysbers, 2001).

In 1997 the American School Counselor Association developed the ASCA National Standards (now known as the *ASCA Student Standards*), in which student competencies in the academic, career, and personal/social domains were identified. Although this was a positive step, more structure was needed. In response, the ASCA National Model® was created in 2003 and revised in 2012 as a prototype for counselors to use in developing a comprehensive, developmental school counseling (CDSC) program. This research-based model integrated the National Standards as outcome-based student competencies that are delivered through professional school counselor competencies.

The efficacy of CDSC programs is documented in the literature. For example, high school students who participated in a fully developed school counseling

program had more positive attitudes toward school (Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 2007). School counselors in a CDSC program performed more activities that were compatible with their training and expressed more satisfaction with their jobs than did those who performed in a traditional school counseling program (Gysbers, Lapan, Blair, Starr, & Wilmes, 1999). With the ASCA model as a standardized program prototype, there is a greater understanding of how the school counselor plays an integral role in student achievement. Furthermore, the ASCA helped promote the profession by eliminating the outdated term “guidance counselor” and instead directed the term “*professional school counselor*” to be used as the preferred professional title.

## Credentialing



In the beginning stages of the guidance movement, there were no training programs for the teachers who assumed the guidance worker role. To alleviate this problem, Frank Parsons established vocational guidance in the Boston schools, and in 1908 the Boston YMCA offered a planned educational preparation program for teachers, known as the Boston School Vocational Counselors (Savickas, 2011). Anywhere from 16 to 25 people met on 16 Saturday evenings to obtain this training (Brewer, 1942, as cited in Savickas, 2011). Over the years, it was recognized that if “guidance counselors” were to be considered a profession, then in-service training was not enough (Bloomfield, 1914, as cited in Savickas, 2011), and to remedy this situation in 1911 Harvard University offered the first course on counseling for three weeks during the summer. Eventually, this course became a six-week course, and one-year later credit was applied toward an associate degree. During the 1940s, there was more emphasis on the type of training school counselors should receive (Gysbers, 2004), and in the 1960s, 38 states required minimal requirements for school counselor certification. Of these states, 34 required mandatory certification, and 20 required a master’s degree (Wrenn, 1962).

In 1981 the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) was created to standardize training for all counseling professionals, including school counselors. This accrediting agency requires a minimum of 48 semester hours of coursework in core and specialty areas in an approved school counseling program. The ASCA “supports the credentialing and employment of those who hold a master’s degree in counseling-related fields with training in all areas specified by the CACREP standards” (ASCA, 2003, para. 2). Today, there are approximately 228 CACREP accredited school counseling programs throughout the nation (CACREP, 2013).



## Formation of the American School Counselor Association

The American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA), now the American Counseling Association (ACA), was formed in 1952 from three like-minded groups. These groups were the National Vocational Guidance Association (NVGA), the National Association of Guidance and Counselor Trainers (NAGCT), now known as the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), the Student Personnel Association for Teacher Education (SPATE), and the American College Personnel Association (ACPA). In 1983, the APGA changed its name to the American Association of Counseling and Development (AACD), and in 1992 it was again changed to the American Counseling Association. In 1953 the American School Counselor Association was initiated as a new division by the APGA senate (now known as the governing body).

With the various counseling specialty areas, it can be confusing as to how these specialties share skills and knowledge and how they differ. The ACA is considered as the parent organization for all counselors and includes 20 divisions organized according to interest and practice areas. For example, if you are interested in learning more about group work research and practice you might want to join the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW). The ACA has an annual fee that is renewable yearly with an additional fee for membership in any of the divisions. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is the division that advocates for school counselors and has its own governing board and membership dues. The ACA divisions are found on the following table with a description of each specialty area.

**Table 1.1** Summarization of ACA Divisions

### **Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC)**

Originally the Association for Measurement and Evaluation in Guidance, and the Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education (AACE), AARC was chartered in 1965. The purpose of AARC is to promote the effective use of assessment in the counseling profession.

### **Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA)**

Chartered in 1986, AADA serves as a focal point for information sharing, professional development, and advocacy related to adult development and aging issues; addresses counseling concerns across the lifespan.

### **Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling (ACAC)**

This newest association focuses on counselors who work with children and adolescents.



**Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC)**

The Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC) is a forum for counselors, counselor educators, creative arts therapists, and counselors in training to explore unique and diverse approaches to counseling. ACC's goal is to promote greater awareness, advocacy, and understanding of diverse and creative approaches to counseling.

**American College Counseling Association (ACCA)**

ACCA is one of the newest divisions of the American Counseling Association. Chartered in 1991, the focus of ACCA is to foster student development in colleges, universities, and community colleges.

**Association for Counselors and Educators in Government (ACEG)**

Originally the Military Educators and Counselors Association, ACEG was chartered in 1984. ACEG is dedicated to counseling clients and their families in local, state, and federal government or in military-related agencies.

**Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)**

Originally the National Association of Guidance and Counselor Trainers, ACES was a founding association of ACA in 1952. ACES emphasizes the need for quality education and supervision of counselors for all work settings.

**The Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC)**

AHC, formerly C-AHEAD, a founding association of ACA in 1952, provides a forum for the exchange of information about humanistically-oriented counseling practices and promotes changes that reflect the growing body of knowledge about humanistic principles applied to human development and potential.

**Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC)**

Educates counselors to the unique needs of client identity development and a non-threatening counseling environment by aiding in the reduction of stereotypical thinking and homophobia.

**Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)**

Originally the Association of Non-White Concerns in Personnel and Guidance, AMCD was chartered in 1972. AMCD strives to improve cultural, ethnic, and racial empathy and understanding through programs to advance and sustain personal growth.

**American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)**

Chartered in 1978, AMHCA represents mental health counselors, advocating for client-access to quality services within the health care industry.

**American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA)**

ARCA is an organization of rehabilitation counseling practitioners, educators, and students who are concerned with enhancing the development of people with disabilities throughout their life span and in promoting excellence in the rehabilitation counseling profession's practice, research, consultation, and professional development.

*(Continued)*

**Table 1.1** (Continued)**American School Counselor Association (ASCA)**

Chartered in 1953, ASCA promotes school counseling professionals and interest in activities that affect the personal, educational, and career development of students. ASCA members also work with parents, educators, and community members to provide a positive learning environment.

**Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC)**

Originally the National Catholic Guidance Conference, ASERVIC was chartered in 1974. ASERVIC is devoted to professionals who believe that spiritual, ethical, religious, and other human values are essential to the full development of the person and to the discipline of counseling.

**Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW)**

Chartered in 1973, ASGW provides professional leadership in the field of group work, establishes standards for professional training, and supports research and the dissemination of knowledge regarding groupwork.

**Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ)**

CSJ is a community of counselors, counselor educators, graduate students, and school and community leaders who seek equity and an end to oppression and injustice affecting clients, students, counselors, families, communities, schools, workplaces, governments, and other social and institutional systems.

**International Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors (IAAOC)**

Originally the Public Offender Counselor Association, IAAOC was chartered in 1972. Members of IAAOC advocate the development of effective counseling and rehabilitation programs for people with substance abuse problems, other addictions, and adult and/or juvenile public offenders.

**International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC)**

Chartered in 1989, IAMFC members help develop healthy family systems through prevention, education, and therapy.

**National Career Development Association (NCDA)**

Originally the National Vocational Guidance Association, NCDA was one of the founding associations of ACA in 1952. NCDA inspires and empowers the achievement of career and life goals by providing professional development, resources, standards, scientific research, and advocacy.

**National Employment Counseling Association (NECA)**

NECA was originally the National Employment Counselors Association and was chartered in 1966. The commitment of NECA is to offer professional leadership to people who counsel in employment and/or career development settings.

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The ASCA has its own governing body with one division charter per state, and holds an annual national conference that usually takes place in late June, and rotates among the four national regions. Student memberships are available and a few of the benefits of belonging include professional periodicals, professional development, liability insurance, and resources. In addition, the *ASCA Scene*, a networking site located on the ASCA website, is available to members with opportunities for school counselors to network through discussions, providing resources, and posing questions on problematic issues.

Most of the states have a chartered counseling association affiliated with ACA and a state school counseling division that is either an affiliate of the state counseling association or is an independent organization with its own governing body. Counseling divisions are found within each of the states for networking and professional development. To become a member of ASCA, go to the link <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/> to join.

### CONCEPTUAL APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.2

Check the ASCA website to determine how to join your state division and region. Where is the closest chapter in your state? How can you join? What is the membership fee? What resources are available from ASCA that support school counselors?

As school counselors became more acknowledged at the national level, many at the state levels advocated for recognition and legislation within each state that would support the mission of school counseling. The following information summarizes state programs and models as well as a discussion of credentialing.

## STATE PROGRAMS AND MODELS

As the ASCA became more vocal about the significance of comprehensive and developmental school counseling (CDSC) programs, more states began to legislate this type of programming. Today, 45 states have adopted a comprehensive developmental school counseling program model. Although the ASCA has recommended that school counselors have a minimum of a master's degree from a school counselor program, there are still several states that do not require this advanced degree in order to be employed as a professional school counselor. Each state determines its own requirements for entering and staying current in the profession, and the CACREP requirements serve as a benchmark even for those training institutions that are not accredited by this agency. However, be aware

that some states require additional coursework such as human sexuality and/or substance abuse issues in addition to the curriculum that is mandated by the state board of education.

## STATE CREDENTIALS AND REQUIREMENTS

Because teachers initially provided guidance services, teaching credentials were considered as a stepping-stone for entry into the school counseling profession. Therefore, many states believed it was essential for school counselors to have teaching credentials and experience as a teacher prior to entering the profession of school counseling. Since vocational guidance was the initial impetus leading the profession, many states mandated an additional requirement of documented work experience prior to entry into this career. Over the decades some believed that teaching experience was an unnecessary requirement and subsequently many states dropped both of these requirements. However, at the present time there are approximately six states that still require teaching experience in addition to a few states that still require proof of work experience prior to entering the profession.

When the teaching requirement was eliminated, some entering school counselors who did not have an education background were having difficulty understanding the educational environment and related tasks such as coordinating activities with teachers, conducting classroom guidance, and performing classroom management. In response to this dilemma, some state departments of education mandated extra fieldwork experiences in schools and/or classes in classroom management as a part of the school counselor training curriculum to supplement the practicum and internship experiences.

Tests such as the PRAXIS, communication and literacy tests, background and substance abuse screening, or being a U.S. citizen are some of the additional requirements some states mandate prior to entering the profession. Credentials also vary between states. Some states offer what is known as a “school counseling certificate” and others a “school counseling license.”

### BOX 1.5 PRAXIS

Some people wonder what the term PRAXIS stands for. It is not an acronym; it is the “exam required for teacher certification.” The Educational Testing Service (ETS) administers the PRAXIS II School Counselor Exam. The exam content is based on counseling and guidance, professional issues, coordination, and consultation.

In some states the recipient is eligible to work in grades preK–12, and in others school counselors are only allowed to practice in specific grades, such as K–8 or 9–12, depending on the training received. Regardless of the type of credential, many school boards consider school counselors as ‘teachers’ and are placed on a teacher salary schedule with the same benefits, including sick leave, personal days, and so on. You may even need to consider whether or not to join an education association such as the National Education Association (NEA). Some educators choose to join this organization to access benefits such as liability insurance. Others join because the school district has agreed to a “closed shop” in which all teachers—and counselors—are required to pay union dues whether or not they concur with the philosophy of this organization.

### CONCEPTUAL APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.3

Check the requirements for the state or school district in which you would like to work as a professional school counselor. What are the requirements? Beginning level salary? Are school counselors placed on a teachers’ salary schedule? Is teaching experience a requirement? If not, are there any special requirements that are needed to enter the school system? How do these requirements match your understanding of what is required of school counselors in the state in which you are interested in working?

There are other credentials school counselors may obtain that provide additional credibility. These include the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

### NATIONAL BOARD OF COUNSELOR CREDENTIALS (NBCC) AND NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS (NBPTS)

Recently, I was speaking with an elementary school counselor who had been working in the schools for 25 years. She revealed that when she graduated with her master’s degree in counseling and received licensure as a school counselor, she decided a few years later to sit for the National Certified Counselor Exam (NCC). She was pleased when she successfully passed this examination, but she didn’t realize the importance of this credential until a parent arrived at her school and demanded to know about her training and experience. Not only was this professional school counselor active in ASCA, she also maintained strong ties to her state and local professional counseling organizations. These professional

relationships supported her personal and professional reliability, and the NCC designation provided further credibility to her professionalism.

The National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) provides certification in clinical mental health, addictions, and school counseling. The National Certified School Counselor (NCSC) is obtained upon successful completion of the National Certified School Counselor Examination (NCSCE). An annual recertification fee is required.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certifies teachers who have demonstrated high standards. Certification salary incentives are often available for educators (including school counselors) who have thoroughly met the 11 standards required by this organization (NBPTS School Counseling Standards, 2002). Requirements to become a candidate include the possession of a baccalaureate degree, three years of experience, and a valid license in the application area. At the present time, the fee for becoming Nationally Board Certified is \$2,500.00, an application fee of \$65.00, and a renewal fee of \$1,250.00.

#### CONCEPTUAL APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.4

Investigate and compare each of these credentials and the merits of receiving either of these credentials. Debate the pros and cons of each designation, and create a personal position statement on the merits of these credentials.

Regardless of whether or not you choose to receive an additional national credential, understanding counselor identity is a topic that has been debated throughout the ages and continues to be an issue today. As a member of the counseling profession you will need to answer the questions, “Am I a counselor with the abilities and skills to effectively work in any counseling specialty, or am I a school counselor trained to work only in the school counseling setting?”



### COUNSELOR IDENTITY

As discussed previously, there are various counseling specialty areas and all of these specialty divisions embrace a wellness model of practice that supports prevention, social justice, and advocacy with a multicultural understanding of individuals. When the counseling organizations joined together in 1952, many hoped that this would provide a greater foundation of support without a loss of each organization’s identity and autonomy. Despite the numerous similarities

that exist among counseling specialties, there continues to be internal tension regarding the profession's vision and direction, particularly in regard to the distinctive role of each of the counseling divisions (Gazzola, Smith, King-Andrews, & Kearney, 2010).

In 2005, the ACA co-sponsored a collaborative initiative to unify the counseling profession, to define counseling, and to develop a strategy for reaching this goal by the year 2020. This enterprise became known as *20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling*. However, at this time the ASCA has chosen not to join this initiative due to the belief that there is more than one counseling profession (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011). Ironically, this is the same philosophy that was debated when the specialty counseling professions merged in 1952 to form the APGA.

### CONCEPTUAL APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.5

Investigate the 20/20 Vision for the Vision for the Future of Counseling. What are the various views regarding this initiative? What is your opinion about ASCA's decision to not support the enterprise?

Although the school counseling profession is relatively new in comparison with other occupations, some of the same issues that inundated the profession throughout the decades are still of concern today. Three decades ago, Aubrey (1983) asserted that counselors should pay greater attention to individual and family counseling in the schools, character development, stressors adversely impacting youth, accountability, prevention rather than remediation, leisure time activities for youth, and violence. School counselors continue to grapple with these issues and more. But before you get discouraged about the concerns impacting the school counseling profession, the ASCA and state affiliates have engaged in an active campaign of professional advocacy, education, and professional development that has been instrumental in advancing and enhancing a greater appreciation for the role of the school counselor. As you think about the various divisions within the counseling profession, think for a moment about the reason you decided to enter this profession. What are some of your attributes that you feel successful school counselors share? How do these characteristics match yours? Conceptual Application Activity 1.6 is designed to help you think about your characteristics that relate to the school counseling profession.



**CONCEPTUAL APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.6**

Look at the list of adjectives found below and mark the traits you feel are characteristic of you.

Caring	Open	Flexible
Calm	Humble	Serious
Creative	Problem-solver	Tolerant
Curious	Sense of Humor	Trusting
Demanding	Understanding	Unique
Genuine	Listener	Consistent
Controlling	Friendly	Generous
Confident	Leader	Imaginative
Gregarious	Mature	Humorous
Sympathetic	Rigid	Naive
Empathic	Cooperative	Honest
Careful	Intelligent	Outgoing
Efficient	Opinionated	Proper
Fun-loving	Reliable	Loyal
Eager	Expert	Reflective
Compassionate	Risk-taker	Accepting
Forgiving	Perfectionist	Hard-worker
Hopeful	Quiet	Impulsive
Independent	Confident	Likeable
Judgmental	Self-conscious	Organized

Ask someone who knows you well to list the adjectives that he/she would use to describe you. Share and talk about the differences and similarities between the lists.

Which of these attributes do you feel are those that are essential to a successful school counselor?

The previous activity has given you an opportunity to reflect on your personal traits, and in the following section you have an opportunity to compare your list with the characteristics identified among successful practitioners.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL COUNSELORS



Counselor educators' attempts to determine the personality characteristics that encompass an effective counselor has been difficult due to the lack of adequate instruments, the indefinable nature of these qualities, and the complexity involved in researching these qualities. Although studies have investigated factors such as age, gender, religious beliefs, theoretical orientation, training, experience, and personality, the traits that make an effective counselor have not been conclusively verified (Reupert, 2006).

Traits such as empathy and rapport (Lazarus, 1985; Oke, 1994; as cited in Reupert, 2006), beliefs (Borcherdt, 1996, as cited in Reupert, 2006), genuineness and congruency, understanding, valuing counselee's ability to solve problems (Meador & Rogers, 1984, as cited in Reupert, 2006), and self-disclosure (Oke, 1994, as cited in Reupert, 2006) are considered essential to counseling outcome. Other characteristics include self-control, sympathy (Wicas & Mahan, 1966, as cited in Jennings & Skovholt, 1999), flexibility, sensitivity, and an ability to create a safe environment (Albert, 1997, as cited in Jennings & Skovholt, 1999). Jennings and Skovholt (1999) also investigated the personality characteristics of master counselors and found emotional well-being, humility, confidence, willingness to experience and process emotional and cognitive dissonance, nondefensiveness, willingness to seek feedback, and avid learning as aspects that create an inviting counseling relationship. Furthermore, in a separate study, counselors identified values as important to work satisfaction that include (Gazzola, et al., 2010):

- Helping others
- Using abilities and knowledge
- Growing and developing as a person
- Achievement
- Creativity and innovation
- Interaction with others
- Variety in work
- Comfort in working space
- Autonomous decision-making
- Financial security
- Career advancement
- Admiration
- Risk-taking
- Managing and directing others

Although there is no general agreement as to the most effective traits of successful counselors, there is agreement that it is the counselee him/herself who is the most essential component of the counseling relationship (Reupert, 2006).

As you have read this chapter, you have learned about the history of the profession and the trends that influenced its development. As you reflect on the past, think about the future and the movements that could have an influence on the future of the profession.

**Table 1.2** Timeline of Significant Events That Shaped the School Counseling Profession**Late 1800s—Early 1900s**

- Industrial Revolution
- Child Labor Laws impacted education
- Compulsory Education Laws influenced the school environment
- First systematic guidance program was established by Jesse B. Davis in Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Eli Weaver and Anna Y. Reed infused guidance into the school curriculum
- Frank Parsons, also known as the “father of guidance” established vocational guidance in Boston
- Boston School Vocational Counselors established to provide guidance workers with information
- Sigmund Freud and John Dewey emphasized mental health issues of youth
- Albert Binet developed first intelligence test
- Alpha and Beta Tests developed (now known as the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery [ASVAB])
- Harvard University established first course on counseling
- Emphasis on educational guidance rather than vocational guidance

**1930s**

- The Great Depression (begins in 1929)
- E.G. Williamson developed a directive counseling approach known as the Minnesota Model
- Carl Rogers developed a nondirective counseling approach also known as person-centered counseling
- “Guidance worker” standards created
- Pupil Personnel Model developed (also known as student services)
- Service Orientation Model organization developed (also known as the 9 Dimensions of Guidance)

**1940s**

- Vocational Education Act (George-Barden Act) passed into law
- Emphasis placed on training for school counselors

**1950s**

- National Defense Education Act (NDEA) legislated
- American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA) formed (name changed to American Association of Counseling and Development (AACD) and now American Counseling Association (ACA))
- American School Counselor Association (ASCA) founded as APGA division

**1960s**

- Civil rights and women’s movements emphasized personal/social student needs
- Guidance Counseling and Testing Program Evaluation developed
- 38 states established minimum requirements for school counseling certification

**1970s**

- Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 42–142)
- Developmental Counseling Model Developed

**1980s**

- Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act (renamed Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006)
- National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC)
- The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) created

**1990s**

- School to Work Opportunities Act
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorized
- ASCA National Standards (now ASCA Student Standards) developed
- Goals 2000: Educate America Act (P.L. 103–227) legislated (now known as No Child Left Behind)

**2000s**

- No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (reauthorization of Elementary and Secondary Education Act)
- ASCA National Model® Developed
- 20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling initiative

**Post 2010**

- ASCA National Model Revised
- CACREP and the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) released the Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling Standards
- The draft proposal of CACREP is proposing that beginning in July 2020, all accredited school counselor programs must be a minimum of 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours

## THE FUTURE OF THE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROFESSION

Although predictions for the future of school counseling and programs are obviously difficult to make, the history of the profession lends some insight into what we may expect in the future. Leaders in the counseling profession were asked about their views surrounding the future of the counseling profession (Shallcross, 2012) and their perceptions of the trends that could impact our profession. Predictions included the themes of violence and bullying, technology, globalization, health and wellness, poverty and marginalized students, accountability, students with special needs, family counseling, and the connection between neuroscience and counseling.

## Violence and Bullying

School violence disrupts learning with the potential to impair emotional and cognitive growth. Targets of bullying, witnesses of aggressive behaviors, and perpetrators of bullying are all influenced by aggression. Although the media portrayals of violence in the schools (such as the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut) make the public believe that these events are common everyday occurrences, statistics indicate that 1–2% of all homicides occur in schools, or in traveling to or from school (CDC, 2012).



**Photo 1.3** Memorial Following Shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut

*Source:* © Lisa Wiltse/Corbis

Bullying is a type of school violence that reaches across all ages and grades and is associated with serious mental health issues such as suicide, homicide, and other acts of violence among victims. In addition, cyber bullies are at risk for continuing their deleterious behavior into the workforce, while targets of cyber bullying are at risk for experiencing poor psycho-social adjustment (Li, 2007).

Bullying often occurs on the playground, on the bus, or when supervision is lacking (Fredland, 2008), yet even when monitoring is increased, educators still do not recognize when bullying incidents occur. When students feel safe in schools there is a reduction in bullying, particularly when supplemented with individual counseling (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Skroban, 1998). School curricular intervention and prevention strategies that have been effective in reducing bullying include: 1) interpersonal skills such as assertiveness, problem solving, and character education; 2) conflict resolution and anger management; and 3) perspective taking and empathy. Individual and/or group counseling may assist targets of bullying in developing assertiveness skills and self-esteem, and aids bullies in acquiring empathy and perspective-taking skills.

## **Technology**

The use and awareness of different types of technology is critical for supporting our role as a school counselor as it allows us to quickly and efficiently conduct our daily tasks. As our technology becomes obsolete, we often passively wait until the school system purchases new technology that may not always meet the needs of the school counselor. This is where we have an obligation to use our communication skills to reach out to the technology industry to request the hardware and software to make our program more effective (Forrester, 2011). Most software designers have never worked in schools and are unaware of the types of technology needed to perform various tasks or provide resources that could make the school counselor more productive.

Technology can assist school counselors with such things as tracking where time is spent, identifying youth at risk, assessing the effectiveness of our interventions, tracking communications with stakeholders, monitoring student progress, obtaining current information on specific issues, and developing websites to share events with stakeholders. With newer types of technology developed on a daily basis, the school counselor can receive training on technological innovations and skills. For instance, some school counselors are using new biofeedback software programs to help youth manage anxiety. There is even some discussion that an “artificial counselor” could assist students with issues that are commonly seen in the counselor’s office today. This counselor avatar could provide advice and fill the need for closing the large student-counselor ratio, though this approach has not

yet been studied sufficiently. However, there are also potential ethical issues to consider. Finally, technology also provides school counselors with an opportunity to raise global awareness by connecting with students in other countries, or to personally connect with school counselors in other parts of the world.

### **BOX 1.6 TWITTER AS A COUNSELING TOOL**

You may be the only school counselor in a school or small school district, which creates a sense of isolation. School counselors in these situations have found the benefits of Twitter to immediately connect with others. Some of the advantages of Twitter are for information sharing, gaining ideas, or receiving immediate responses to a problem situation.

### **Globalization**

Certain forms of counseling have a tradition in Western societies, and we are now recognizing that traditional counseling theories are not always applicable to individuals from other cultures. When counselors recognize how diverse world-views and beliefs impact learning and peer relations both in the academic setting and at home (Ponterotto, Mendelowitz, & Collabolletta, 2008), they may be more receptive to engaging shaman, spiritual leaders, and other cultural healers as sources of support (Hohenshil, Amundson, & Nikes, 2013) and partnership. Due to internationalization and greater exposure to various attitudes and values, school counselors are combining traditional approaches with meditation, yoga, mind-body connection to teach students such skills as relaxation and stress reduction.

### **BOX 1.7 DID YOU KNOW? IMPROVING YOUR CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE**

Learn about the culture of the students and the families with whom you work.

- When working with a student from Asia, remember that the term “counseling” is a taboo term. Instead, use the terms “learning” and “education” to introduce your role.
- In some countries the concept of counseling would more easily be understood as talking to a religious leader or “wise person.”
- In India, mental health issues are now being introduced in schools, with the government beginning a 5-year plan of policy initiatives to address the needs of adolescents.



## Health and Wellness

Our profession is founded on a philosophy of wellness, yet issues such as child obesity and a lack of leisure activities plague our youth. School counselors are instrumental in bringing about a greater awareness of techniques for healthful living through counseling. Furthermore, healthful living concepts can be integrated with academic areas. For example, school counselors could collaborate with science teachers to teach students gardening skills while they learn about healthy eating, where food comes from, and take responsibility for caring for the crops. In addition, the school counselor could work with the physical education teacher to engage students in physical activities to develop an interest in outside activities while keeping physically fit. Psychoeducational groups or small group counseling groups may also promote wellness while students learn about healthy lifestyles and develop a healthy body image.

### **BOX 1.8 COUNSELORS AND VICARIOUS TRAUMATIZATION**

The term “burnout”—that is, compassion fatigue—was first used in the 1970s and is related to emotional exhaustion, emotionally distancing self from counselees, and feelings of ineffectiveness. These conditions lead to prolonged emotional stress vocationally and personally, and lowered self-esteem. In addition, counselors often suffer from vicarious traumatization when continually exposed to counselees in crisis. We have an ethical responsibility to be in touch with the needs of our students as well as our own needs and to find resources that will assist in stress alleviation.

## Impoverished and Marginalized Students

Approximately 23% of 5- to 17-year-old youth live in poverty in the United States (Kids Count, 2012), which is associated with numerous personal, social, and academic challenges. For example, attendance and tardiness may be an issue for students who take responsibility for getting their younger siblings ready for school while their adult caregivers are working. Teens who need to work long hours to bring needed income into the home have little time to complete homework. Students can be living in temporary, transitional housing such as in shelters or with friends that could disrupt schooling.

Even when impoverished children and adolescents have permanent housing many cannot afford weather appropriate clothing or school supplies and may feel uncomfortable attending school for fear of embarrassment or being bullied. Many children come to school without breakfast or even miss this meal due to a late arrival. In other

cases students may arrive for breakfast, often their only meal of the day, and leave after they are fed. All of these concerns could make it difficult to make friends or to sustain a consistent education. The school counselor is in a role to serve as an advocate to make these students and their families feel welcome by creating a positive culture and educating educators about the conditions impacting these students.

### **Accountability**

As you have read in this chapter, accountability has been an issue throughout the history of the profession, yet school counselors have been reticent about revealing how their interactions make a difference in the lives of students. This omission has resulted in school counselors being among the first educational professionals to lose their jobs when funding is scarce. In a recent study (Studer, Diambra, Breckner, & Heidel, 2011), school counselor graduates trained in the ASCA National Model® were asked to indicate the extent to which they engaged in accountability practices within their school counseling program. The results revealed that school counselor participants across all school levels were collecting data about their programs at rates “slightly better than average.” Although it is reassuring that efforts are made to collect data, it is difficult to understand why counselors are not engaged in collecting and analyzing data more frequently, particularly when school counselors are more likely to have a more comprehensive background in assessment and evaluation than do teachers and/or administrators (Ekstrom, Elmore, Schafer, Trotter, & Webster, 2004). Change from the status quo is difficult when school counselors do not demonstrate program effectiveness, and with today’s educational climate school counselors are obligated to document activities, assess, analyze, and share program data.

### **Students with Special Needs**

The numbers of students receiving special education services has increased over the decades with approximately 14% of students between the ages of 3 and 21 receiving these services (Education bug, n.d.). With the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), growing numbers of students with special needs are placed in general education classrooms. Students with disabilities display characteristics such as depression, anxiety, few friends, lowered self-esteem, behavioral problems, and dropping out of school, with a greater risk for suicide (Romano & Herman, 2007). School counselors can serve an essential role by advocating for these students and their parents (Taub, 2006), as well as being aware of special education laws. In addition to working with special education teachers, the school counselor collaborates with general

education teachers who need additional support, or access resources for the students with special needs who are placed in their classroom.

## Family Counseling

As a practicing school counselor I realized the benefits of working with the child and his/her family, yet this goal was difficult to achieve as parents/guardians were often unable to leave work to attend a school conference. I suggested to my administrator that perhaps we could negotiate new working hours that would allow me to arrive at school later in the morning and stay later in the afternoons a few days of the week for the purpose of conducting parent consultations. My suggestion was met with the response, “We can’t do that because teachers would not understand.” Despite my repeated attempts to convince the administration that this plan could benefit the parent/school relationship, I was unsuccessful and the discussion ended. When we consider that the family and the school system are the two most essential support systems for the child, it makes sense that these two institutions work collaboratively for the benefit of the child.

### **BOX 1.9 BENEFITS OF PARENT/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS**

Greater academic achievement is realized through school/family partnerships, and attendance increases when parents feel welcome and involved in the schools.

Providing mental health services in the school is particularly important when there are many families who do not have the means to access community mental health professionals (Nelson, 2006). Several factors serve as barriers to this partnership: 1) unlike other mental health professionals, school counselors are trained to focus on interventions that enhance academic growth (Nelson, 2006), and few school counseling training programs offer courses and supervision in family systems theory. Although the CACREP standards specify that training in family systems is necessary (Collaboration and Consultation; M.4 Knowledge), school counselors often receive cursory information about this approach; 2) school hours are often a negotiated agreement between the school board and teachers, and deviation from these hours may create difficulties in regard to available space; and 3) being alone in a school building after hours could create safety issues. Regardless of the reasons for not conducting family counseling, school counselors have an opportunity to work with families and are encouraged to take courses and receive training under supervision.

## Neuroscience—The Mind and Body Connection

As technology and science advance, we are learning more about the roots of human behavior. We have historically looked at heredity, experiences, and environmental factors as the foundation of emotions and behavior, yet as the field of neuroscience develops there is evidence that the interrelated connections of memories, thoughts, and experiences leave a neural foundation. These structures are the source for creating new networks, as a basis and stimulus for change (Leanza, 2012).

Humans have the ability to grow new neuro-pathways, with brains changing and adapting as we engage in activities. Research has shown that counseling stimulates new brain networks (Leanza, 2012) that lead to neurological change. Engaging the student in creative techniques such as music, art, and dance have the potential to create a framework for new paths and change. Furthermore, activities such as smiling can stimulate mood and empathy, and staying intellectually active such as learning a new language enhances the synapses in the prefrontal cortex. When we consciously relax through mindfulness, breathing, or summoning images, the brain is affected, with evidence that yawning controls the brain temperature and assists with concentration. The school counselor could apply this research by prescribing yawning to students when concentration is needed, such as before an exam, or encouraging students to engage in aerobic exercise which protects the brain from stress, or dialoguing with others to strengthen emotions and behaviors (Blevins, 2012).

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have briefly discussed the history of the counseling profession, including the evolution from “guidance worker” to professional school counselor. Political, economic, and social events influenced the trends within the profession, and the American School Counselor Association has actively responded to these factors. The influences that shaped our profession include the Industrial Revolution as a stimulus for vocational guidance. With passage of child labor laws and recognition of mental wellness, individual and group counseling became a school counselor task, as did the testing movement and accountability. As school counselors proliferated in the school environment, organizational structures were proposed and with it, the recognition for credentialing and standardized training at the national and state levels.

As we respond to the needs of society and our school-age youth, we need to understand the “self” of the counselor and the personality traits that contribute to effective counseling. Finally, predictions about trends that may influence the future of school counseling are discussed.

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