

**Benchmark Case Conceptualization & School
Counseling Services Treatment Plan Assignment**

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Confidentiality

When working with any child, it is imperative that we as professional school counselors explain what confidentiality is to the student. Whenever I have a student in my office share something that is concerning in any way, I make sure to go over what confidentiality is and the parameters around what would warrant me sharing any information from them. I explain to the student that if they want to hurt themselves, someone else, or if someone is hurting them, I must tell someone who can help. I explain to them that this is not meant to break any trust or rapport we have built, rather to ensure that they know they are protected and safe.

Parent Contact

For my students that need some more targeted intervention time, I will follow the process of sending out opt-out letters to the parents/guardians of the students prior to services. Because of our dynamics at our school, it is quite challenging to get in touch with parents and even trickier to obtain any sort of permission letter back in a timely manner. Due to this, my site supervisor advised me to go the route of opt-out letters instead so that I could begin my small groups and if there was an issue, adjust accordingly.

Focus of Services Needed

Based on this student's observable behaviors, I have concerns about her attendance and achievement level. She is very bright and can catch onto learning quickly, however, because she has missed so much school and continues to show up late to school, she has fallen way behind on her academics.

Collaboration with Necessary Stakeholders

The first stakeholder that I consulted with prior to meeting with this student was her classroom teacher, who filled out a referral for my small group services. Another stakeholder I

collaborated with was my administrator on some attendance incentives we could obtain for her from our connection with Indian Education, since she is a part of a tribe here in the Salem community. And the last stakeholder that I worked with was of course her mom. Her mom has had some concerns regarding her school avoidance since the start of this school year and the in-attendance issues have persisted.

Additional Information

After consultation with the stakeholders, I have learned some information regarding family dynamics and practices that I believe could be impacting this student and are necessary to consider moving forward.

Interventions Implemented

The school counseling services that I intend to provide to this student include both academic and social-emotional interventions. I think first and foremost her school avoidance needs to be addressed and I will work to find ways to get her bought into and wanting to attend school. Once that is addressed and she is attending more, then I can really begin to find the spaces in which she is needing some help with her academic success.

Additional Resources

As of right now, I am working with mom to possibly collaborate with Indian Education to see what other resources are available to her through them. Mom has mentioned some concerns of a possible reading or learning disability as the reason for AM's school avoidance. Moving forward, connecting with Indian Education to find out how they can help AM more would be beneficial.

Details of the Goal

Right now, the attendance goal that we have created for AM is putting her on an “attendance punch card”, that works to track each day she comes to school with a hole punch. Once she reaches ten total punches, she receives a prize of her choosing provided by Indian Education. While in-attendance has slightly improved since starting this incentive, she is still arriving to school very late. Due to her arrival time being inconsistent and often after core instruction, she has missed a lot of academic intervention help. Beginning this week, I would like to implement another SMART goal centered around her arriving to school on time. For each day that she arrives on time, she will receive an additional incentive of her choosing. These two goals are both attendance goals that will hopefully lead to future achievement goals.

Execution of the Goal

I plan to involve this student in the establishment of these goals by having a very open and honest conversation about how she is feeling and where she is falling behind academically. I think if we work together on this SMART goal, it will make her feel independent in her choices and confident moving forward to achieve them.

Developmental, Ethical, and Multicultural Considerations**Cultural Background**

The student I am working with is from the Choctaw Grand Portage Band Tribal community. Her resolved ethnicity is American Indian/Alaskan Native. She is involved in her tribe, and I believe her cultural views reflect those of her tribe. Communication between myself and her tribe is necessary.

Cultural Considerations

Some social/cultural considerations in this case include the value of education that the American Indian/Alaskan Native community holds. In a study measuring the impact of education

on the American Indian/Alaskan Native community, the data shows a major correlation in individuals who achieve academically and their long-term success. The study also indicates that there is still a great divide and disagreement on what is important to educate American Indian/Alaskan Native children on both in school and within their tribe (Brayboy & Lomawaima, 2018).

Barriers to Consider

Some identifiable barriers that may be interfering with this student's academic and social/emotional development include primarily family. When communicating with the mother of this student, she does not seem to be too concerned with her missing a lot of school, showing up late to school, or falling behind in her academics. The impression that I have gotten from the student's mother is that whenever she can get the child to school is just good enough. She does not seem to have an attitude of wanting to encourage her child to be a part of our school community, neither does it seem like education is very important to her family values. Due to this lack of attendance AM struggles to connect with her classmates and teacher. As a result, she has become distant and disconnected from her peers and this is the main reason she has been placed into a small group intervention to strengthen her friendships.

Relevant Research

In a study done on the relationship between a child's sense of belonging at school and their attendance patterns, the data shows a direct correlation between and child's lack of attendance and their connection to their peers. The data reflects the impact of in-attendance on a child's level of self-esteem and belief in their ability to achieve (Marksteiner, Janke, & Dickhäuser, 2019).

ASCA Standards

This case includes standard A.1c. which discusses a counselor's duty to eliminate any barriers that could be impeding a child's development. Another standard that is applicable is A.2b. which covers the importance of discussing with the student their goals and procedures while engaging in counseling services and the limits of confidentiality within a group setting. An additional standard that I think is important to note here is A.3b. which talks about the necessity of school counselors collaborating with any stakeholders involved in the child's education (ASCA, 2022).

Counseling Theory & Techniques

Theoretical Orientation

I plan to implement a humanistic orientation/technique when working with this student. I believe this approach would be best because of her growing understanding of the importance of education in her life, her cultural background, and her sense of self-efficacy. This approach will allow me to work with this student where she is at, build up her self-confidence, and create an individualized sense of responsibility for her own education. Studies show that approaching children with a humanistic orientation directly grows their sense of self-efficacy and leads to an increase in their motivation for learning (Kustinah, Kambali, & Lama'atushabakh, 2022).

Academic Techniques

Some academic and career techniques that I would take into consideration when counseling this student would be to implement academic help for her, and to grow her sense of excitement for her potential future career. I believe that tapping into her passions and using those as a motivation for learning is a great strategy moving forward. Creating a study buddy group for her to work with other students in her classroom that are her friends would give her the opportunity to catch up on her academics, while fostering and growing her friendships with her

peers. In a study done on the interactions between children in blended classroom settings and the impact of social interaction and group work, the data shows that there is a positive impact on group interactions and an individual's academic success levels (Law, Geng, & Li, 2019).

Positive Interventions

The specific positive interventions that I intend to carry out with this student include creating and implementing an attendance incentive program to track her daily attendance and gift her with rewards for attending school for ten days. Another intervention I will begin with her is to have weekly check ins to touch base with her on how she is doing at home and in the classroom. I intend to start up a small study buddy group with her and a few of her classmates to allow time for her to catch up on missed academics. And lastly, I intend to induct her into a small group intervention targeted at nurturing and flourishing her friendships with her same-age peers. In a study done on the impact of interventions on elementary aged kids, the data shows a clear positive correlation between targeted interventions and a student's level of social/emotional growth (Sanchez et al., 2018).

Group Sessions

As I mentioned prior, group sessions would absolutely be appropriate for this student. Having a small group environment for her to connect one on one with her peers, learn valuable friendship identifiers, and grow her sense of belonging at school is vital.

Possible Supports and Goals

There are possible family, home, community, and school supports that would be useful in this case. For family supports, I believe it is crucial to move forward in continual communication with her mom about her SMART goals. A support for her home would be to continue encouraging her attendance at school so that she can access these additional interventions.

Moving forward, collaborating with her tribal community is paramount in making strides towards continuing her academic and social/emotional success.

Individual Appraisal and Outcomes Assessment

Assessing Progress

I intend to assess this student's progress throughout these interventions and supports being put into practice by elevating her strengths and building a sense of resiliency and self-efficacy within her. This approach is culturally sensitive because it factors into account how her strengths can very well come from her cultural practices. As I interact with her more, I will be able to encourage her development based on the background knowledge I learn from her regarding her level of academic ability.

Measuring Progress

Assessment of this student's progress will be made by using data to track their attendance improvement overtime, as well as tracking their level of engagement in small group interventions with both the friendship group and study buddy group. Her progress will be tracked over an eight-week period to measure any improvements in attendance, achievement, and social/emotional growth.

Outcome Data

The outcome data that I will utilize with this student will come from a pre- and post-assessment that she will fill out herself, measuring her self-view on her friendship relationships. Data will also be collected to track her attendance percentage overtime, as well as her academic success while these interventions are implemented.

References

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