

**Helping Youth Think Better,
Feel Better, Relate Better:
Maximizing Potential with
Social, Emotional and
Cognitive Skills**

Counseling 448
Intervention and Advocacy for Children
Rosemary A. Thompson, Ed.D., LPC, NCC
rathompson@ada.edu
www.school-counselors.com

*"Childhood Should
Be A Journey..."*



...Not a Race."



**Meeting the Needs of
All Children**





A Day in the Life of American Children

Every Day in America

- 1 young person under 25 dies from HIV infection.
- 5 children or youth under 20 commit suicide.
- 9 children or youth under 20 are homicide victims.
- 9 children or youth under 20 die from firearms.
- 34 children and youth under 20 die from accidents.
- 77 babies die.
- 157 babies are born at very low birth weight (less than 3 lbs., 4 oz.).
- 180 children are arrested for violent crimes.



A Day in the Life of American Children

Every Day in America


- 367 children are arrested for drug abuse.
- 40 babies are born to mothers who had late or no prenatal care.
- 99 babies are born at low birth weight (less than 5 lbs., 8 oz.).
- 1,318 babies are born without health insurance.
- 1,378 babies are born to teen mothers.
- 2,818 babies are born into poverty.
- 2,218 babies are born to mothers who are not high school graduates.
- 2,801 high school students drop out.
- 1,328 babies are born to unmarried mothers.
- 4,248 children are arrested.
- 7,883 children are reported abused or neglected.
- 17,287 public school students are suspended.

Changes in the Climate of Schools Today




- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talking | <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chewing Gum | <input type="checkbox"/> Underachievement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Dropouts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Running in the Halls | <input type="checkbox"/> Violence and Guns |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cutting Class | <input type="checkbox"/> Rape/ Robbery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dress Code Violations | <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide/Depression |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Littering | <input type="checkbox"/> Unintended Pregnancies/STIs |

The Climate of the Schools: Reflects a Microcosm of Society Imbedded in an Escape Culture...




The legacy of the last decade:
Jonesboro, ARK; Endinboro, PA;
Peducah, KY; Houston, TX;
Springfield, OR; Littleton, CO; Ft.
Gibson, OK; Mount Morris Township,
MI; West Palm Beach, FLA; New
Orleans, LA; Santee, CA




The Impact of Violence in the Schools: From 1996 to 2002

- 73 students were wounded on school grounds by violent acts of classmates
- 73 students were wounded on school grounds
- 44 people died
- Average of age of the shooters were 15 years of age



Seriousness of the Problem

- ⇒ Bullying is the entry level behavior to violence
- ⇒ 60% of bullies have criminal convicts by age 24
- ⇒ 40% of all studies are bullies or victims; the remaining are often bystanders
- ⇒ Long-term victims may develop mental health issues such as school phobia, anxiety and depression
- ⇒ Approximately 282,000 students are physically attacked in U.S. schools each month



Report Card of the Ethics of American Youth (2000) Survey of Middle School:

- ☐ 1 in 5 boys took a weapon to school
- ☐ More than 1 in 3 said "They don't feel safe at school."
- ☐ 43% of high school and 37% of middle school boys believed it was okay to hit or threaten a person who makes them angry



The Columbine Assassins:

- Harris and Klebold were "under the influence" of antidepressants.
- Were known as social pariahs, not accepted by the elite crowd of cheerleaders and athletes
- They were ridiculed, tormented, and scorned for not accepting or conforming to the "dominant norm" of their high school venue.



Legislative Consequences (Federal Law)

- "Safe and Drug-Free Schools"
- "No Child Left Behind"

Relationships Between Youth are Strained Polarized by the Insignia of their Various Tribes:

- ✓ The Crips ✓ The Bloods ✓ Leather-clad Death Metal Heads ✓ Skinheads ✓ Stoners ✓ Surfers ✓ Skaters ✓ Straightedge Kids ✓ Gutter Punks ✓ Multiplacred Gypsies ✓ Born Again Hippies ✓ Geeks ✓ Nerds ✓



Ten Disturbing Trends in Youth Character

- ☞ Rising Youth Violence (Interpersonal and Gang Violence)
- ☞ Increasing Dishonesty (lying, cheating, stealing)
- ☞ Growing Disrespect for Parents, Teachers and Legitimate Authority Figures
- ☞ Increasing Peer Cruelty
- ☞ Rising Prejudice and Hate Crimes
- ☞ Deteriorating Language



Ten Disturbing Trends in Youth Character

- ☞ Declining Work Ethic
- ☞ Declining Personal and Civic Responsibility
- ☞ Increasing Self-Destructive Behaviors (e.g., substance abuse, suicide and self-mutilation)
- ☞ Engaging in Destructive Behavior without Understanding that it is Wrong

Looming Demographics: Our Challenges as Parents, Educators and Helping Professionals: Diversity

- ☞ In the not-so-distant future (2015), half of all public schools students will be minorities, and no group will dominate the ethnic landscape
- ☞ In Fairfax County Public Schools (VA) students come from 182 different countries and speak more than 100 languages





Looming Demographics: Our Challenges as Parents, Educators and Helping Professionals: School Dropouts

- ☐ With current national trend of high stakes testing and diversity – may see a rise in dropouts
- ☐ School dropouts earn 237 billion less in their life time than high school graduates
- ☐ Welfare, Unemployment and crime prevention costs for the dropout population will cost 6 billion

Significant Correlates: Alcohol and Substance Abuse Influence

Significant Correlates: Alcohol and Substance Abuse Influence

- School
- Absenteeism
- Truancy
- Classroom Disruption
- Violence
- Declining Achievement
- Dropout Rates
- Automobile Related Deaths

- Vandalism
- Tardiness
- Discipline

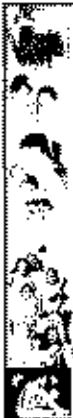


Significant Correlates: The Relationship Between Abuse, Violence and the Family

☐ The family, the group to which most people look love and gentleness is also the most violent civilian group in our society. "☐

Minsky Stravinsky

Behind Closed Doors



Significant Correlates: The Scaring Effects of Poverty

- Family poverty is related to declines in educational outcomes, and is relentlessly correlated with high rates of school-age childbearing, school failure, violent crime, abuse



Significant Correlates: The Relationship Between Abuse and Violence

- Children who are abused have higher rates of delinquency,
- have a tendency to be impulsive, have difficulty expressing
- themselves, and acknowledging painful feelings.



Significant Correlates: Behaviors Presented in the Media Can Be Interpreted as Norms

- The average child spends 900 hours a year in school and 1500 hours a year watching television.
- By middle school he/she has viewed 8,000 murders and over 100,000 other acts of violence
- Children who watch violence become less sensitive to the pain and suffering of others and view violence as an acceptable solution to human problems.

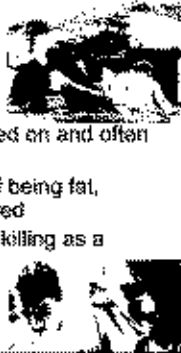


Significant Correlates: The Link Between Bullying and School Shootings

Some Common Traits in Recent

School Shootings:

- The child felt inferior or picked on and often had a grudge
- The attackers complained of being fat, near-sighted, short, or unloved
- Most were suicidal and saw killing as a means of ending a tortured life in a blaze of terror



Social, Emotional, and Cognitive Deficits Permeate Child and Adolescent Behavior

- ✦ Assertiveness
- ✦ Decision-making
- ✦ Social Support
- ✦ Impulse Control
- ✦ Critical Thinking
- ✦ Deadline Disorder
- ✦ Affective Processing
- ✦ Anger Management
- ✦ Problem-Solving
- ✦ Empathy
- ✦ Communication Skills
- ✦ Perception Checking
- ✦ Classifying

Social, Emotional and Cognitive Deficits

- ✦ *Emotional Deficits* manifest themselves in increased incidents of violence, suicide and homicide.
- ✦ *Cognitive Deficits* place youth at a disadvantage academically making them more vulnerable for criminal influences.
- ✦ *Social Deficits* manifest themselves with poor peer relations, an inability to resolve conflicts and manage anger.

Social, Emotional and Cognitive Deficits

- ❖ Current research is linking intellectual, social and emotional processes
- ❖ Social, emotional and cognitive processes are inextricably linked to learning.

Empowering Youth with Social Skills...

- ↳ Social skills are *interpersonal skills essential for meaningful relationships with others.*
- ❖ They fall into categories such as *being kind, cooperative and compliant to reduce defiance, aggression, and conflict*

Selected Social Skills

- ❖ *assertiveness* ❖ resolving conflict ❖ managing anger ❖ peer pressure refusal skills ❖ receiving feedback ❖ perception checking ❖ giving constructive criticism ❖
- ❖ being socially responsible ❖

Empowering Youth with Emotional Skills...

Emotional skills are intrapersonal skills such as managing emotions, recognizing a feeling as it happens, motivating oneself to attain goals, delaying gratification, maintaining self-control and metamood (making mood connections).

Selected Emotional Skills...

✦ expressing empathy ✦ positive affirmations about self ✦ seeking social support ✦ managing anxiety ✦ self-disclosure ✦ confronting ✦ dealing with false accusations ✦ preparing for a difficult conversation ✦ describing feelings ✦ stress management ✦ using self-control techniques ✦

Empowering Youth with Cognitive Skills...

✦ *Cognitive skills are thinking skills such as knowing how to problem solve, describe, associate, conceptualize, classify, analyze, make inferences and think critically.*
✦ *Cognitive skills encourage metacognition, i.e., thinking about our thinking.*

Selected Cognitive Skills...

- ❖ Graphic organizers/mind maps ❖
- ❖ creative problem solving ❖
- ❖ critical thinking ❖ reducing test anxiety ❖ analysis for bias ❖
- ❖ evaluation and application ❖
- ❖ SQ3R ❖ PMI ❖ CAF ❖ MI ❖ meta-cognition ❖

Integrating Social, Emotional and Cognitive Skills: A Psychoeducational Life Skill Approach

Psychoeducational techniques include: instruction, modeling new behaviors, discussing new behaviors, role playing, feedback, and "ownwork."

The Psychoeducational Life Skill Approach: To Enhance Resiliency

Life Skill Sessions: A Six Step

1. Instruction (counselor teaches the skill),
2. Modeling (counselor shows and discusses the skill),
3. Discuss the skill; show how it can be used in daily life,
4. Role play (set up a practicing role play with a peer),
5. Feedback (reinforce positive attempts of role players), and
6. "Ownwork" (work to practice outside of the session).

**Children: Twenty-five Percent of
the Population, One Hundred
Percent of the Future...**