

## **The Professional School Counselor and Group Counseling**

(Adopted 1989; revised 1993, 2002, 2008; reviewed 1999, 2008)

### **American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Position**

Group counseling is vital in the delivery of the ASCA National Model to students and should be supported by school districts as part of an effective comprehensive school counseling program.

### **The Rationale**

Group counseling, which involves a number of students working on shared tasks and developing supportive relationships in a group setting, is an efficient, effective and positive way of dealing with students' academic, career and personal/social/emotional developmental issues and situational concerns. By allowing individuals to develop insights into themselves and others, group counseling makes it possible for more students to achieve healthier personal adjustment, cope with the stress of a rapidly changing and complex environment and learn to communicate and cooperate with others. Research on group counseling suggests that this intervention is rather robust for a variety of academic, career and personal/social/emotional concerns (Gerrity & DeLucia-Waack, 2007; McGannon, Carey, & Dimmitt, 2005; Paisley & Milsom, 2007; Whiston & Sexton, 1998).

### **The Professional School Counselor's Role**

The professional school counselor's training in group facilitation is unique to the school setting. School counselors provide group services to students and parents and may utilize their specialized training to facilitate school staff and administration on relevant professional issues or topics. Group services offered to students and parents are based on school and community needs, which are assessed through survey data. School counselors prioritize group offerings based on analysis of survey data. Group counseling should be offered to all students in a PK-12 setting.

### **Summary**

Group counseling is an efficient and effective way to meet students' developmental and situational needs. Group counseling makes it possible for students to achieve healthier academic and personal adjustment in a rapidly changing culture. Groups are an integral part of a comprehensive school counseling program and should be included and supported by every educational institution. The professional school counselor's training in group facilitation benefits students, parents, school staff and administration. Group counseling has a positive effect on academic achievement and personal adjustment.

### **References**

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