

Adjustment Counseling

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Salem Prep High School offers a full array of counseling services to students, including individual and group counseling, peer mediation, risk assessments and the development of behavior intervention and safety plans. In addition, we take advantage of making outside referrals for students who may require more mental health related counseling or medication management. All of our educators are annually trained in Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI), the cornerstone of which is Nonviolent Crisis Intervention. Physical restrains are never employed unless it is determined that the student(s) is in danger of hurting themselves or others.

Students at Salem Prep High School are offered both individual counseling and group counseling sessions. There are various counseling techniques used to maximize therapeutic progress. In addition to the more traditional approaches, we utilize:

The School-Connect Curriculum

School-Connect: Optimizing the High School Experience is a counselor-facilitated curriculum designed to improve the social, emotional and academic skills of high school students and create supportive relationships among students and between students and school staff. The curriculum is built upon five social and emotional competency areas: social awareness, self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills and responsible decision-making. These competencies are identified by research as critical to the healthy development of children and adolescents and their success in school (Durlake et al., 2011). This curriculum is taught to the students on a daily basis in a community meeting setting, as well as the cornerstones of the curriculum being integrated into their academic classes.

Teaching Prosocial Skills

Through the use of modeling, verbal prompts, cues, verbal praise, relationship building, and classroom instruction, we work to strengthen the students' knowledge of appropriate behavior and reinforce the students practicing these behaviors. While most students pick up on positive social skills through their everyday interactions with adults and peers, many students with

emotional or behavioral disabilities need to learn these skills through direct and indirect instruction. There are many causes of social skills deficits, including: lack of knowledge, inconsistent behavior despite knowledge, lack of sufficient degree or level of strength and competing skill deficits or behaviors. Prosocial skills enable students to know what to say, to make better choices in social settings, and to behave appropriately in diverse social situations. The extent to which students possess good social skills can influence their academic performance, behavior, social and family relationships and involvement in extracurricular activities outside of the school. Positive social skills are also linked to the quality of the school environment and school safety.

Conflict Resolution

Salem Prep High School staff works on developing positive behavioral repertoire with students through the use of coaching, prompting, modeling and cueing the students to engage in socially acceptable behavior with one another and with staff. When there is a social conflict between two or more students, the adjustment counselor and/or school psychologist have a sit down conflict resolution with the students. By facilitating peer mediation with the individuals involved, it gives the students the opportunity to practice appropriate conflict resolution skills, while having a supportive staff member there to assist. This method of conflict resolution has proven to be very successful at Salem Prep, and is something we hope the students carry over into their personal lives outside of school.

A School-Wide Positive Behavior Support Plan

Salem Prep High School has a school-wide positive behavior support plan which is used for all students in order to encourage and motivate positive behavior. The behavioral expectations and way that the system works are clearly explained to the students, and the staff ensure that the students clearly understand what is expected and what rewards they receive in return for appropriate behavior. The goal of this positive behavior plan is to help students develop appropriate social behaviors and skills.

Individual Behavior Intervention Plans

For some students, the school-wide positive behavior plan is not enough. They may display more challenging behaviors that require a more individualized systematic positive behavioral plan. These plans are designed with the adjustment counselor and/or school psychologist, principal, teachers and student. All individualized plans are formally written and provided to all staff, the student and the parent.

Individualized Safety Plans

On occasion, a student may display unsafe behaviors or have unsafe thoughts that require an individualized school safety plan. These plans are designed to address unsafe or potentially dangerous behaviors and thoughts and provide all staff in the school with the knowledge of

what they need to do if and when a student displays unsafe behavior or has unsafe thoughts while in school. These plans include emergency numbers for parents, therapists, and emergency personnel. All school staff are provided with copies of Safety Plans and are reviewed on an as-needed basis.