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# Data Collection is Key in Clarification of School Counselor's Role

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Running head: DATA COLLECTION IS KEY

# Data Collection is Key in Clarification of School Counselor's Role

Michelle D. Kells

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Acknowledgements

For the love of my life…..Matt.

This has been quite the journey. I have to say that the interview process to get into the program was just as grueling as getting this thesis done. Wouldn't you agree, Tom?

Thank-you to Barb Higgins. I honestly believe that you were my ticket in. You saw the potential in me even before I realized it was there. Thanks for Starbucks and our talk. Everyday I thank you. Self-class was an experience and it was only until the last night we had class that I actually got it. It all makes sense…….… THE HERE AND NOW.

Jeff Cochran & Leslie McCulloch….you both are phenomenal and terrific advisors. I thank you both for being there for me. As professors you had a comfortable, honest and relaxed way about you. Jeff, maybe it was your southern manners or quiet, easy-going way; or Leslie, it was your warm smile, willingness to give a hug or share in a laugh. I enjoyed being in your presence. I found that with the two of you I could be myself and just simply be. THANK-YOU.

Janel and Tracy, my dear, dear friends. Those days in the SUNY Brockport Counseling Center, I'm glad we were in it together. Aside from the seriousness of it all, we sure did have fun. You two have been such a support through all of this madness. I know we will always stay connected (even if it is through voice mail).

Taylor, Matt & Jimmy…..my bundles of sunshine. I know you don't quite understand what graduate school is but someday you will. What you do know is how important this whole process has been for me. I thank-you for understanding at your young ages.

Matty, I will always remember your inquisitive nature. Thanks for keeping me on my toes. Whenever I've said that was going to school you always had a gazillion questions for me. In case I forget here are my answers….

Yes, I do call my teachers by their first names.

Snack? Well, there really isn't a 'snack time' but we can have snack if we want.

Recess? No, there is not a playground and we don't go outside to play.

Taylor, I thank-you for helping me write my paper (actually doing the typing) so I could take a break. You typed a great ½ page for the hour break you gave me. For always asking me if I was OK and always offering a hug when you thought I could use one. You certainly are a counselor in training.

Jimmy, for the "I love you, Mom" and great, huge bear hugs. I love that you love to hang out with me. I can always count on you to give me an infectious smile to think about throughout my day.

Again, Matt…I Love You for your unwaivering support, understanding, and always being in my corner. You are my hero!

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## Abstract

The school counselor's role in the 21st century has expanded and the demand of school counselors has increased as well as the number of students they are responsible for. School counselors today are encouraged to prove their accountability through the documentation of data. This review focuses on the significance of accountability and the lack of it in school counseling. The school counselors and the secretary at the middle school collected data on the issues that students had appointments for. This data was analyzed and explained. A review of recommendations and limitations were discussed as well as the beliefs/opinions of the school counselors who documented the data for this review.

Once you see a child's self-image begin to improve, you will see significant gains in achievement areas, but even more important, you will see a child who is beginning to enjoy life more.

Wayne Dyer

# Data Collection is Key in Clarification of School Counselor's Role

"So, you're a intern counselor, a school counselor? What exactly is a school counselor anyway?" This was a statement asked of me by a student who came in to talk when he was in crisis. This question stuck with me for the duration of the day and it still does. I know what a school counselor is and does but how many outside of our profession have a clear understanding of what the role is of a professional school counselor? And what does a school counselor encounter in a day, week, month, or year?

With these questions stirring in my head, as well as that of the student in my office, I believed it would be well worth my time to pursue research further of the role and the day to day accountability of what counselors see students for over an 8 week period.

I found that my initial goal was to identify what types of issues students came to the counseling office for as well as identify those students who were turned away due to unavailability. But it did not end there. I needed to know more. How do we justify our profession? How do we prove our worth in the academic arena and account for what we do? How has our profession evolved? Just as the role of the school counselor has changed, so has the concept of collecting data and how documentation can improve counselors' professional image.

## School Counselor

### *Definitions of school counselor*

ASCA stated that professional school counselors hold a master's degree or higher in school counseling, is a certified/licensed educator with the qualifications and skills to address all students' academic, personal/social and career development needs (2003). The Department

of Counselor Education mission statement, within the SUNY College at Brockport Graduate Catalog (2005-2007), stated that counselors are individuals who apply mental health, psychological, or human development principles that address wellness, personal growth, career development, and pathology. This would entail courses of study that are required, but not limited to, individual and group work, measurements and evaluation, career development, human experience, contemporary issues, integration, and a year internship at a school with a site supervisor.

School counselors are expected to apply their professional training in schools in order to support student success. The school counselor is a leader within the educational community who helps/assists to build a supportive learning environment that nurtures the development of academic, career, and personal/social competence among students and fosters an appreciation of diversity and a commitment to social justice (Galassi & Akos, 2004). School counselors assume many responsibilities that include providing individual and group counseling, conducting classroom presentations on current student issues with a large student body, providing educational testing and academic advising, completing various administrative tasks (Butler & Constantine, 2005).

Much of the school counselor's time at the middle school has been related to scheduling. Even after the counselors make the new schedules, they often have to reschedule periodically throughout the new-year due to conflicts, schedule changes for Academic Intervention Services (AIS), and teacher requests.

*The Role of the School Counselor*

Today's school counselors are faced with demands to demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of their counseling programs (Astramovich, et. al., 2005). This could be self-

inflicted demands to keep up with expectations, or demands from administration to perform at a higher level. School counselors must have a general understanding of normal developmental trends to communicate expectancies to students, parents, and teachers (Johnson & Kottman, 1992). To be effective, school counselors are being asked to consider an expanded role as counseling professionals in creating a sense of community in schools for every student by being able to (a) team and consult with teachers to improve student achievement; (b) provide in-service for teachers on children's developmental needs; (c) create mentoring and peer counseling programs to provide support for all students; (d) assess barriers to student learning; (e) collect and interpret student data for use in helping educators engage in needed reforms; (f) advocate for rigorous academic preparation and experiences that will broaden all students' educational and career options; and (g) link with agencies in their communities to provide the widest range of resources for students and their families (Musheno, 2002; House & Hayes, 2002). In other words, school counselors are to be a jack-of-all-trades (Murray, 1995). In addition to providing services to students, and the schools they work in, school counselors are often encouraged to/required to seek out professional development opportunities to broaden their education within the profession.

So, what doesn't a school counselor do? The role has been expanded, and expectations of what a school counselor's requirements are, are more detailed. So where does it end? It would seem that with all these demands placed on the school counselor that some area in their job profession would suffer. Whether it is the students not receiving the counseling services needed, schedules being completed just to get done, students being turned away from the counseling center not getting the appointments they had hoped to get, and if they did get the appointment was it a session that helped that child? Maybe it is the counselor who suffers.

The counselor who stays at the school late into the evening to 'catch up' on schedules, send out e-mails that have been put off for days, listen to voicemails and write 'notes to self' to do for the next day. This is a prime example of school counselor burnout.

The New York State Model for Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling programs (2005) stated that individual planning in the role of the school counselor can be monitored through: (a) case management where school counselors monitor individual student progress; (b) individual appraisal where students evaluate their interests, skills, and abilities through the use of data and testing; (c) individual advisement when students work with the counselors to develop an appropriate educational plan; (d) placement of students in the proper educational setting as they meet their academic and career goals.

The role of the school counselor has changed over the years and counselors have had to revisit what it is to be a school counselor. There have been some who have encouraged school counselors to see themselves as educational leaders, student advocates, and social change agents in addition to providing direct counseling services to students (Amatea & Clark, 2005). School counselor tasks, expectations, and demands vary from state to state, district to district, and school to school (House & Reese, 2002). Many times it is administration/school principal who defines the job of the counselor. When there has been a lack of knowledge as to what the role is, school counselors can be left to take care of clerical duties, disciplinary actions, or lunch duty, which are clearly not part of the school counselor's role. As a result, school counseling has lacked a consistent identity of what it means to be a school counselor. This has led to a misunderstanding of what school counseling is and what it can do for a school (Murray, 1995; Professional School Counseling, 2003; Wells, 1979). The ASCA emphasized that counseling programs are beneficial and should be directed to all students, not primarily

those who are at risk or high achievers (Wigfield, 2005). School counseling programs can contribute to the success of all students but it has not been successfully translated to other educators, and therefore they do not recognize the potential for school counselors as key players in educational reform efforts (House & Hayes, 2002). With the development and implementation of counseling programs designed to enhance student achievement it would be a direct way of tying school counseling to the mission of schools and clarifying the role of school counselors (House & Hayes, 2002).

## School Counseling Evolved Throughout the Years

The first school guidance programs appeared in the late 1800s and were closely connected to vocational education (Paisley & Borders, 1995). Social, political, and economic events outside of the schools impacted the importance of this vocational trend (Herr, 2002). During this early period in history, it was a time when immigrants came to the United States to seek economic and social opportunities; concerns about child labor were growing, as well as people migrating from the farms to urban areas seeking industrial jobs (Herr, 2002). As vocational education was evolving Frank Parsons was identified as a key player in the reform and later became known as the Father of Vocational Guidance. At the inception of school counseling, the counselor's role was limited to vocational or college planning. They typically sat at their desks and waited for students to come to them (Viccora, 2006b). The focus of school counseling programs have changed over time from vocational and educational decision-making, to personal growth, to responsive services for "at-risk" populations, to developmental programs available for all students (Paisley & Borders, 1995).

Today's school counselors are being asked to assume a greater role in the lives of their students. Issues that students are faced with and the demands placed on counselors have

increased significantly. Students bring to their counselors issues such as substance abuse, teen pregnancy, suicide, and these counselors continue to assist students in career planning and the college application process. All students are in need of a comprehensive developmental counseling program but with counselor-student ratios averaging 513:1, it is difficult to imagine all students receiving the assistance they need and counselors making it happen for them (Whiston, 2002).

The number of high school graduates is projected to increase by 11% between 2002 and 2013 and much more needs to be accomplished to guarantee each student success and an equal opportunity for a quality educational experience (Stone & Dahir, 2007). It does not seem that the demands placed on school counselors will subside or become easier because expectations and responsibilities have been consistently added without subtracting any items from the job description (Covington & Grant, 2006). Issues, concerns, and demands from parents, students, administration and even counselors will only become more specific and complicated. School counselors must carefully choose where they spend their time and energy (Sears, 1993). In order to focus on students' personal and social, educational, and career needs, Sears (1993) explained that counselors need to move from a service-oriented approach (orientation, information, assessment, counseling, placement, and follow-up) to a skills-based school counseling program. It is important for the field of school counseling to place more emphasis on increasing the number of school counselors and providing more effective programs to students rather than on initiating collaborative programs (Whiston, 2002).

Family dynamics of today have changed significantly from years ago and will continue to evolve. It has been more common to have single parent families, divorce, poverty, women in the workplace, more technology in classes, an increasing violence in schools, within families

and communities( Paisley & Borders, 1995). This means that concerns of years past have not disappeared but that new issues of concern will continue to change and add to the mix.

Viewing how quickly things change such as political, economic, and technological advances of the past 10 years, counselors recognize their own limited capacity to foresee what counseling will be like in the next century (Anderson & Reiter, 1995).

## Data Collection

### *Importance*

It has now become more common for school counselors to collect data to develop an accurate and efficient system to track the day-to day-activities. Because school counselors have access to all the available quantitative and qualitative data from the school and other sources, they are in the best position to use this data as advocates for all students (House & Hayes, 2002). With this commitment to data, school counselors are showing that they can focus on student achievement; integrate conclusions and decisions on data, research, and professional standards; and demonstrate a commitment to school improvement through sharing accountability for results by moving critical data elements (Dahir & Stone, 2005). Data collection provides written documentation that can be revisited to assess quality work and provide for self-reflection about the job (Wilson, 1997). Wilson (1997) also stated that this type of record keeping can especially help beginning counselors discover positive professional growth. Data can be used for several purposes such as determining effectiveness of work, improve services and enhance professional image (Fairchild & Seeley, 1995). Data inform and challenge our thinking to determine the need for systemic change, confirm progress, and reveal shortcomings in student performance (Dahir & Stone, 2003). The results of data can be utilized to determine the needs of the counseling department, to determine an effective lesson

plan and result in an understanding of the beliefs, values and ideas of the school counselors (Hernandez, Rotunda & Hardy, 2006). By using data, Dahir & Stone (2003) also stated that school counselors can present a picture of the current situation of student needs and issues and examine the practices that can lead to higher levels of success. The reasons for the importance of data collection far outweigh the excuses not to collect data. It can only be beneficial, even if its' results and outcome may seem insignificant it has still shown something.

*Data in Detail*

As important as data collection is, it is just as important to personalize how it is to be documented. Data can be broken down into many subcategories, depending on how detailed the information needs to be. This can be as specific as gender, ethnicity, class schedule, or socioeconomic status (Dahir & Stone, 2003). Some common ways to document data is to incorporate sections with the date, columns, rows, name, and any additional information that may be pertinent to the research being studied with sections or spaces left blank with the option to add information as needed.

There are numerous ways to evaluate a school counseling program depending on what type of data is collected (enumerative, process, or outcome), the consumer group (students, teachers, parents and administrators) from which feedback is sought, and the data collection methods available (tabulation, rating scales, questionnaires, time analysis, interviews, case studies, observation, expert or peer review) (Fairchild & Seeley, 1995). It has been most common for school counselors to collect a numerical summary or enumerative data as a means to assess and evaluate the impact of a school counseling program (Dahir & Stone, 2003; Fairchild & Seeley 1995) because it is easy to collect. Enumerative data does not reveal how well the counselor performs when the data collected is a documentation of student contacts,

parent or teacher consultation, or the number of guidance classes taught (Studer, Oberman, & Womack, (2006). With process and outcome data, there is less familiarity with the strategies and methods. Simply presenting numbers as data is no longer effective. As school counselors, trying to account for our careers within the schools, we must acquire more depth to our research.

Just about any question can be answered about the effectiveness of the school and the counseling program working in by using and documenting different kinds of data (Stone & Dahir, 2007). Four different kinds of data, as stated by Stone & Dahir (2007), can be effective samples to utilize. These are: demographic data, student achievement data, perception data and school process data. Demographic data can be used to describe the total student population, the students by class, or the staff in the building. Stone and Dahir (2007) describe student achievement data as that which "talks to us about learning as an outcome of curriculum and instruction," (p. 18). Perception data are gathered through questionnaires, from needs assessments, focus groups and interviews (Hernandez, Rotunda & Hardy, 2006; Stone & Dahir, 2007). As stated in the work of Hernandez, Rotunda, and Hardy (2006), an example of perception data would be a teacher survey. School process data shows only that something happened or occurred and does not provide any additional detailed information (Hernandez, Rotunda & Hardy, 2006).

*Results of Data*

Once data is collected and the information is found it is time to analyze the findings. Farber (2006) states that after data collection is completed there may be a feeling that the answers to many questions may already be intuitively answered. By reading, understanding, and examining the data, this information tells a story that confirms progress and reveals

shortcomings in student performance (Dahir, 2005). These findings make it possible to determine how policy and practices affect issues of the students, which enable all school counselors to work closely with administrators and faculty to close the achievement gap (Dahir & Stone, 2003; Stone & Dahir, 2007). For school counselors data collected regularly, whether it is quarterly, by semester, or yearly, it is looking at the numbers and percentages of how time is spent, how it affects the schools, and how that supports the school's goals (Conrad, 2006). School counselors who focus their efforts on using data in a way that promotes growth in their field demonstrates a strong commitment to sharing the responsibility and accountability for student improvement (Dahir, 2005).

*Going About the Process*

How does one begin to understand the process of data collection when it is overwhelming to even consider? As school counselors how does one go about organizing or identifying data that needs to be collected? School counselors are overwhelmed with just getting through the day and adding another task to the list may seem like an impossible feat. Often, counselors haven't been trained in data collection and don't know where to start (Conrad, 2006).

It has been suggested to start small and recruit support from colleagues, administration and share what the plan of action is. Rather than simply using tabulation method try using a form of data collection that can measure a goal to compare to from year to year.

## Accountability

Accountability requires systematically collecting, analyzing, and using critical data elements to understand the current achievement story for students, and to begin to strategize, impact, and document how the school counseling program contributes toward supporting

student success (Dahir & Stone, 2003). To be accountable is to explain, answer to or take responsibility for the job that is being performed. School counselors are now being asked to be accountable which involves describing goals and what is being done to meet them as well as documenting the data that supports any accomplishment that may be claimed (Myrick, 2003).

Accountability begins to address issues plaguing the school counseling profession, such as operational inefficiencies and the lack of perceived legitimacy (Conrad, 2006). It also requires all educators to systematically collect, analyze, and use data to understand the current achievement and success stories for students (Dahir & Stone, 2005 (NYSSCA journal). In school settings, principals and teachers have been expected to be accountable in their profession. In the past, school counselors had not been held to the same accountability standards as other educators (Dahir & Stone, 2005) but today it is an ongoing responsibility of the profession at the national, state, and local levels (Gysbers, 2004). Today, school counselors are being challenged to demonstrate the effectiveness of the school counseling program in accountable and measurable terms (Dahir & Stone, 2005). Accountability data not only promote existing programs, they suggest areas for improvement and reflect the relationship of the school counseling program to the overall mission of the school (Hughes & James, 2001). A well-designed accountability system enables administrators and counselors to identify student needs and ways to meet them (Myrick, 2003). A commitment to accountability shifts public perception from questions such as "what do school counselors really do?" to showing how school counselors are key players in the academic success story for students and are partners in student achievement (Dahir & Stone, 2003).

Data collected through accountability activity can be used for several purposes, most notably to improve services, to provide evidence of effectiveness, and to enhance professional

image (Fairchild & Seeley, 1995). When data is collected to establish accountability, school counselors begin to understand that they are simply collecting information they already know. Counselors are researchers on a daily basis. They gather information about students and generate theories, study environments and draw conclusions based on observations about them (Farber, 2006).

The ASCA National Model (2003) and the New York State Model for Comprehensive School counseling Program (2005) emphasize school counselor accountability as a key component of school counseling programs (Dahir & Stone, 2005). An accountability system can be a source of comfort and satisfaction when there is evidence that goals are being achieved and hence spark professional pride (Myrick, 2003).

*School Counselor Reluctance*

Being accountable is not a new concept but for school counselors it can be intimidating. Some counselors may be reluctant because they are already overloaded with responsibility and by being accountable they may take on additional assignments.

Some may believe that being accountable is beneficial to their career but aren't sure how and are hesitant about implementing new programs (Conrad, 2006). Depending on each district and administration, they may be reluctant to approve data accountability from school-aged children because it may be believed that students are not a reliable source for obtaining information ( Studer, Oberman, & Womack, 2006). A big aspect of a school counselor's reluctance may be a lack of support network. School counselors are much more effective with a team, central office support, and administrative support (Conrad, 2006). Initially it may be overwhelming, especially for those who have been in the field of counseling for many years

and who have not been exposed to data accountability because the fear of numbers remains an obstacle to overcome.

*Guidelines for Accountability*

In order to ease any adversity, or stress regarding data, one must come to terms with addressing the benefits of data accountability. It is important to understand the different types of strategies and to find the one that proves most comfortable for the individual and pertinent to the situation.

As discussed in Fairchild & Seeley's article (1995) there are 13 accountability strategies that can be used for school counselors. They are: needs assessment; advisory committee; tabulation of activities; time analysis; counseling case notes; student evaluation of counseling: grades 7-12; teacher evaluation of counseling program; accountability conference; parent and teacher evaluation of the assessment service; formal written report; school board presentation; teacher presentation; and public relations-public information activities. With each of these accountability strategies it would force the counselors to participate in some sort of interaction and sharing of information that the school counselors access in their profession. By participating in an accountability conference it requires that a formal meeting be scheduled to discuss the counseling program, strengths and weaknesses, and ideas for improvement (Fairchild & Seeley, 1995). This is a perfect opportunity to bring data that had been collected to show how effective the school counselor role is.

There have been a few of the accountability strategies that have been most pertinent in my research and internship experience. Tabulation of activities was of significant value and involved recording the specific issues that students came in to the counseling center for. This method is easy to tally and can quickly identify the types of services one provides (Fairchild &

Seeley, 1995). Time analysis was used for accountability to track the amount of time spent on activities involved with, students seen, meetings attended, groups run in a day. Being that the days can go very quickly for the school counselor, this method of accountability would show over a period of time how each day was spent and possibly how time management can be improved or done differently.

## Making a Difference

What school counselors do or fail to do are key factors affecting the future of the students they come in contact with (House & Hayes, 2002). School counselors who commit to improving student results contribute to raising the achievement level of every student (Dahir, 2005). It comes down to being able to answer the question, "What do you do as a school counselor? Does it make a difference?" With school counselors taking responsibility for the accountability of their profession and collecting data, sharing it with administrators, teachers, and peers, the school counseling profession will soon come to a more definitive answer as to how our position positively affects the students we work with. Accountability is tied to student success and case studies through examples that are supported by data enable counselors to clarify their role and functions. Accountability studies present opportunities for counselors to tell their stories, increase visibility, support and let counselors count and be counted (Myrick, 2003). "If school counselors do not relate their work and programs to the mission of schools and document success, they are at risk of extinction", (House & Hayes, 2002, p. 8). It is the relationship between principals, school counselors, and faculty that is dependent on the success of any reform movement in education (Covington, 2006).

## Goals and Objectives

The first goal of this research project was to gather anonymous data from the School Counselors at East Irondequoit Middle School over a period of 8 school weeks/40 days pertaining to specific student issues encountered on a scheduled and unscheduled basis. The objective of this collection of data was to analyze, inform and identify the areas of need and guide the development of the Counseling Department by increasing awareness of the importance of the school counselor's role in supporting students' social and emotional needs to help ensure future academic success. The second goal was to identify the most recurring themes students were bringing to the counseling center and identify if the themes were different for the scheduled and unscheduled days.

The objective of having the 5 open ended questions for the counselors to complete after the data had been collected was to obtain their opinion about their profession, their feelings/beliefs about the results and allow them to come to a more profound thinking about the perceptions of their role. I believed that the days for counselors go by so quickly and if they were able to take a bit of time to reflect on the previous weeks of collecting data and identify the greatest need, areas that may be lacking, and what is most challenging, they may be able to realize the impact of data collection accountability.

In addition to the School Counselors collecting data, it was also asked that the secretary document the students who came in seeking an appointment on that particular day over the 8 week/40 day period. It was asked that she tally the number of students who were turned away, not able to have an immediate appointment when they walked in. For these non-emergency appointments, she asked the students if they pertained to academic, personal/family, social/peer concerns.

It was hypothesized that largest number of issues for scheduled appointments would be more on the academic level and the unscheduled appointments would be more at the social/peer area. It was a concern to this researcher that the counselors would forget to tally the students they see on a daily basis due to the fact that this documentation of data was not part of their regular routine.

Another goal was the hope that these school counselors would understand the importance of collecting data. This data collection packet that was provided was made to be as user friendly as possible with the dates, and issues already stated and listed. No matter how easy it is made for the documenter it is the responsibility of that individual to take the initiative. This shows that if data collection is not accounted for then the accountability of the school counselor is not apparent.

## Method

### *Participants*

The participants in this research study were 3 full time staff members in the Counseling Center at a suburban middle school in western New York. The number of students to be seen by the participants was an unknown number. Additionally, the secretary in the Counseling Center documented data of the students who requested to be seen but were turned away.

### *Setting*

The data available from the U.S. Department of Education (2004-2005) stated that this suburban middle school had 856 students enrolled. Broken down into ethnicity it stated that 3 (0%) were American Indian/Alaska Native; 8 (1%) were Asian/Pacific Islander; 74 (9%) were Hispanic; 123 (14%) were African American; and 648 (76%) were White. Students who were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was 40%. Within this district that borders the city, it

serves a community of 33,000 residents. There are six schools in operation within the district, with approximately 3,500 students and 500 employees. About 3.8% of families and 5.4% of residents live below the poverty line, including 6.8% of those under age 18 and 6.8% of those age 65 and over.

*Procedure*

A data collection packet was distributed to the staff in the Counseling Center at East Irondequoit Middle School. It was asked that the Counselors document quantative data in a collection packet pertaining to issues students see their Counselors for on a daily basis for a period of the 8 weeks/40 days. The participants had the option of answering a questionnaire of 5 open ended questions that were attached to the data collection packet. The daily data collection packet consisted of a variety of issues students may wish to have discussed with their counselor. These issues ranged anywhere from personal, social, to academic topics. All of the data was kept with the individual participant until the collection had been completed.

The Counseling Center secretary was also asked to participate in the data collection process. During this time of data collection, a separate data collection packet was given to document the number of walk in students who were not seen by the counseling center staff on the same day the student came in to the center. This form was brief and simply required a check as to the reason the student was requesting to be seen. The reasons listed were academic, social/peer, or personal/family.

A sample copy of the letter to the counselors, the data collection packet and the 5 open ended questions are attached in Appendix A. A sample copy of the letter to the secretary and the data collection packet are also attached in Appendix B.

## Results

The results of this research study were compiled into 2 separate findings detailing scheduled data (Figure 1 & Figure 3) and unscheduled data (Figure 2 & Figure 4) collected by the counselors. Within Figure 1 and Figure 2 specific issues students brought to their counselors were shown as percentages. Within Figure 3 and Figure 4 it was shown as an easy comparison of each specific issue when the appointment was scheduled or unscheduled. The counselors also discussed their assessment of what their opinions/beliefs were about their findings. The data results collected by the secretary were shown in Figure 5 and Figure 6.

As shown in Figure 1, the students who had scheduled appointments saw their counselors primarily for Academic concerns (26%) and following behind was OTHER at 11%. As noted by the counselors who documented their data in the OTHER category it was stated that this was identified as scheduled meetings, team meetings, parent conferences, family meetings, an incarcerated parent, and a 504 parent conference. At 10% was the category of Anxiety and then at 9% the issues of Peer Relationships. Then falling to 6% was Family Stress and issues of mediation at 5%. Students coming in to talk about Depression as well as those who had regularly scheduled Group Counseling sessions ranked in at 4%.

The results for students who came in to the counseling center and were seen by their counselor immediately (Unscheduled walk-in appointments) were significantly different from the results of those that were scheduled appointments.

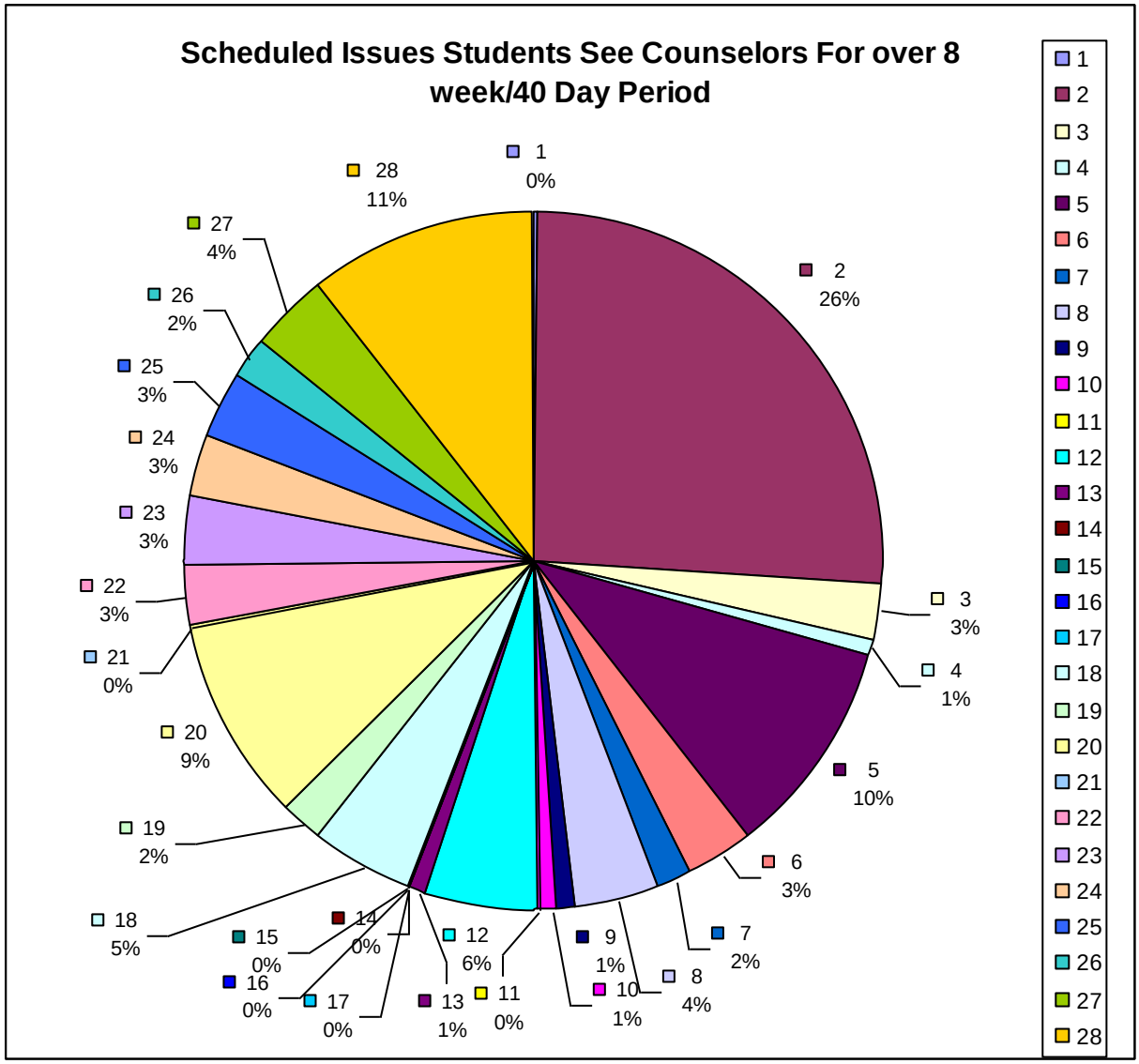
The middle school students who had concerns that related to issues that dealt with their social and peer groups seemed to be of most concern with the unscheduled appointments. At the highest percentage was Peer Relationships coming in at 17%. The students who deal with the day-to-day problems of friendships and conflict came in with Bullying concerns 12% and

trying to work out the problems through Mediation at 11%. The students who were Disruptive and could not be kept in the classroom ranked in at 8%. Trailing behind at 7% was Aggression/Conduct. What was found to be the highest percentage for the scheduled appointments, Academics, came out to be a mere 6% for the unscheduled appointments. At 5% were Anxiety, Depression, and Family Stress.

To show the top 5 Scheduled (Figure 1) issue percentages (with compared percentages of unscheduled) were: 1.) Academics 26% (unscheduled at 6%); 2.) OTHER 11% (unscheduled 3%); 3.) Anxiety 10% (unscheduled 5%); 4.) Peer Relationships 9% (unscheduled 17%); 5.)Family Stress 6% (unscheduled 5%)

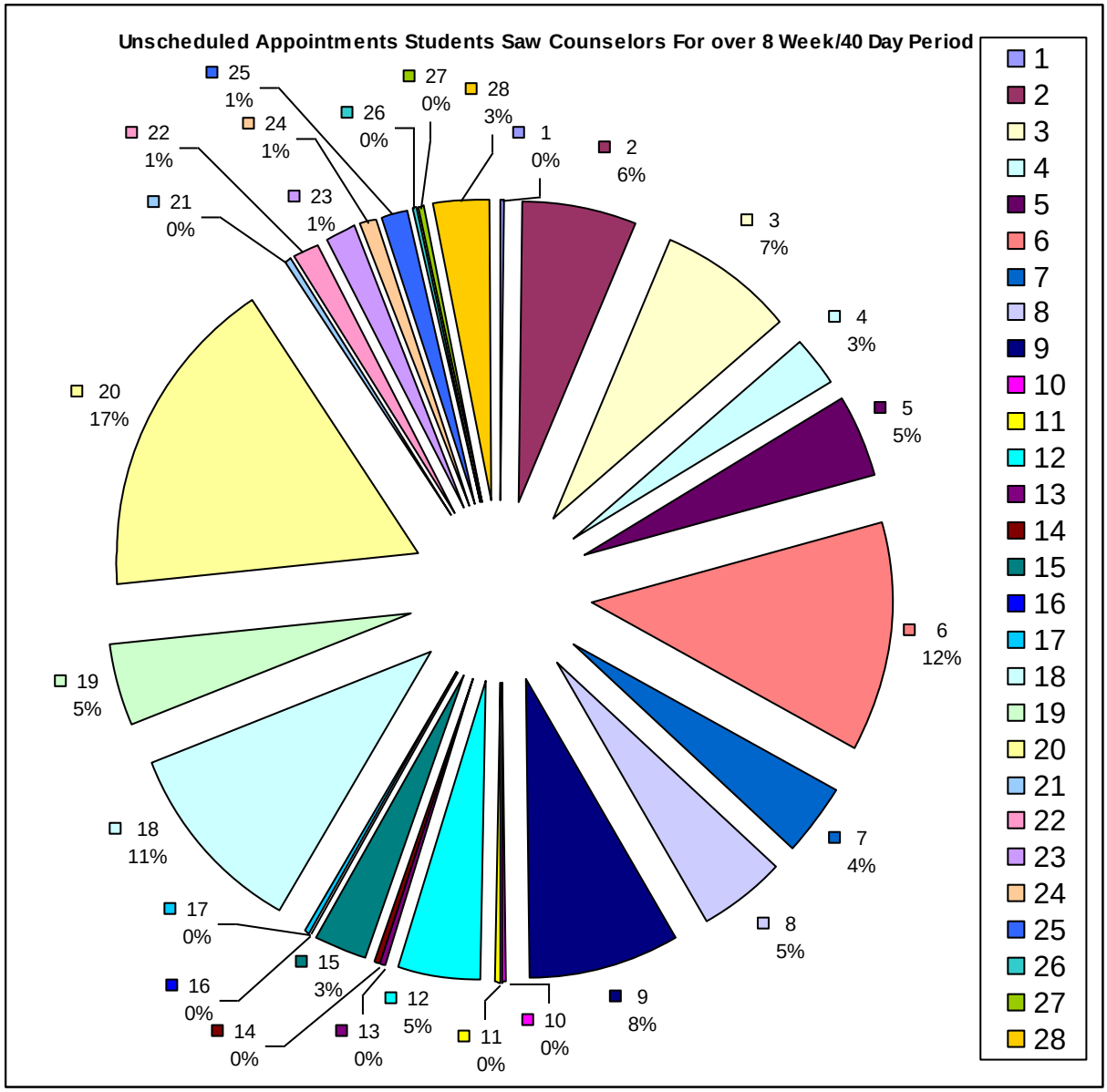
To show the top 5 Unscheduled (Figure 2) issue percentages (with compared percentages of scheduled) were: 1.) Peer Relationships 17% (scheduled 9%); 2.) Bullying 12% (scheduled 3%); 3.) Mediation 11% (scheduled 5%); 4.) Disruption 8% (scheduled 1%); 5.) Aggression/Conduct 7% (scheduled 3%).

Figure 1.




1. Absenteeism
2. Academics
3. Aggression/Conduct
4. Alcohol/Drug Abuse
5. Anxiety
6. Bullying
7. Child Abuse/Violence
8. Depression
9. Disruption
10. Divorce
11. ESOL
12. Family Stress
13. Financial Issues
14. Impulsivity
15. Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior
16. Job Loss
17. Learning Disability/ADD
18. Mediation
19. Parents/Stepfamilies
20. Peer Relationships
21. Poverty
22. Self-Esteem
23. Special Ed.
24. Sexual Behavior
25. Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts
26. Transfer In/Out
27. GROUP COUNSELING
28. OTHER

Figure 2.

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21. Poverty
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23. Special Ed.
24. Sexual Behavior
25. Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts
26. Transfer In/Out
27. GROUP COUNSELING
28. OTHER

As shown in Figure 3, the number of scheduled students seen for specific issues over the 8 week/40 day period were significantly different from the number of unscheduled (see Figure 4) students seen for the same issues.

Figure 3.

**ISSUES**

1. Absenteeism
2. Academics
3. Agression/Conduct
4. Alcohol/Drug Abuse
5. Anxiety
6. Bullying
7. Child Abuse/Violence
8. Depression
9. Disruption
10. Divorce
11. ESOL
12. Family Stress
13. Financial Issues
14. Impulsivity
15. Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior
16. Job Loss
17. Learning Disability/ ADD
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24. Sexual Behavior
25. Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts
26. Transfer In/Out
27. Group Counseling
28. OTHER

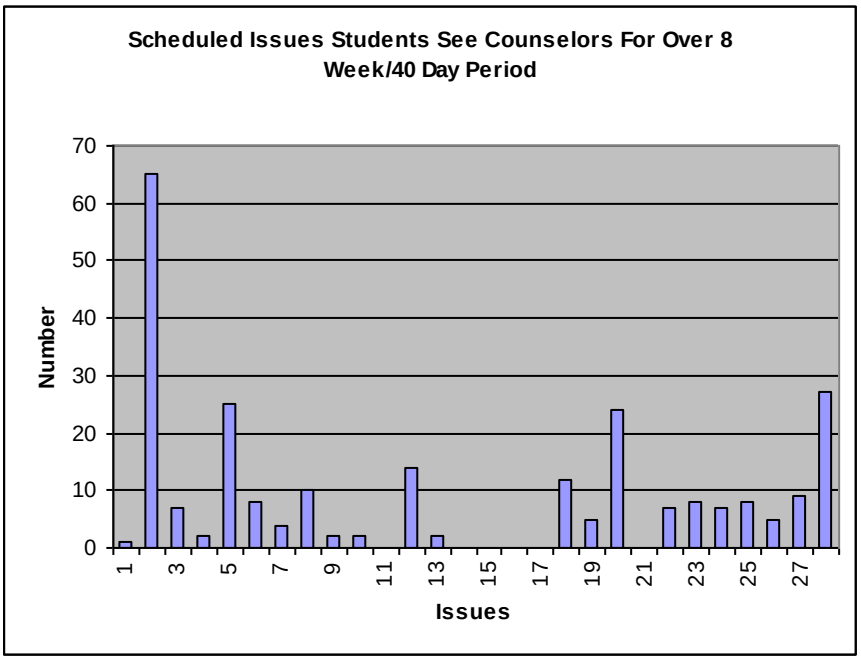
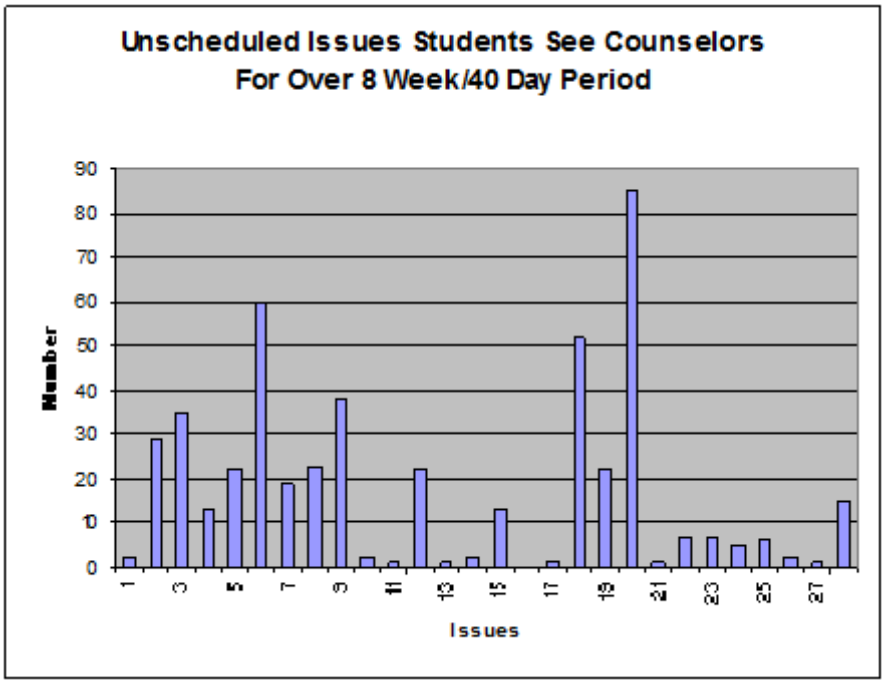



Figure 4.



At the completion of the data collection packet there were 5 optional questions regarding their data collection results. The 5 questions were: 1.) Based on the data you've collected, was there anything in particular that stood out for you? Do you believe that you were able to service the needs of the students you saw in the amount of time that you saw them? 2.) What do you believe are your perceptions of your role as a counselor in your school? What are they and who/where do they come from? 3.) Is there any particular area in your role as a school counselor that you believe is lacking? Where do you see the biggest need? 4.) What is the most challenging part about being a counselor in your middle school? 5.) What do you find to be the biggest reward or the most fulfilling part of being a counselor in your middle school?

In response to question one, 'counselor A' stated that had this survey been done mid year the number of students was significantly higher and the time available for each was strained. Both Counselor A and B commented that being this data was collected at the end of the year the number of students seen had declined due to the many end of year meetings and activities, tests, and projects. 'Counselor B' said that it was difficult to 'keep up' with the data collection and it was difficult. The students often came in with multiple issues and counselor B was unable to always meet the needs of the students. After they were already in the appointment being seen for one issue, other issues came up such as mediations. Students may have felt rushed and as a result did not feel comfortable sharing. 'Counselor C' felt that the number of disruptions and incidents of anxiety were surprising but for the most part believed that the student's needs were being met. It was the consensus that more time is always beneficial when working with students.

In response to question two, 'Counselor C' stated that many people, staff, parents, administrators, look to the counselor to solve problems rather than consult and brainstorm solutions. The role perceived ranged from crisis counselor, mediator, scheduler, preventive worker, provide emotional support, academic support, act as a liaison between parents, teachers, students, and administrators to resolve academic, emotional, social issues that may have an impact on the student's learning. Counselor B believed that many perceptions of the counselor's role comes from administration.

In response to question three, time was the most popular response. In order to run groups there needs to be the opportunity for group planning. Professional training is lacking for the counselors. Counselor A would like to see more professional training in specific mental health areas, career education, and social skills. Counselor C as well stated that there was a lack in the ability to implement a counseling program. Currently there has been no formal counseling program to address the student's career needs. Counselor B felt that the kids often did not feel liked or supported by their teachers. All of the counselors answer to many and are pulled in many directions. It was stated that Counselor B felt that their role was to do many jobs and that none of them were done as well as would like.

In response to question four, the most challenging part about being a counselor was a consensus answer. It was being able to balance all the needs of the students and keeping up with the demands of the job. This included balancing the demands of the teachers, keeping their respect and having a good professional working relationship at the same time being able to advocate for the needs of the student.

In response to question five, the biggest reward of being a counselor was being available and helpful to the students in crisis, staff who are non-judgmental, fellow counseling colleagues, and when it is realized that a difference has been made in a student's life.

The data collected from the secretary showed that over the course of the study, the students who came in to the counseling department requesting to see their counselor at that time were turned away due to unavailability. The student was given an appointment for a later time in the day or an appointment for another day. Some of the students may have left notes for their counselor explaining their concern/reason for needing to be seen. As shown in Figure 5, the number of students not given appointments over the 8 week/40 day period was broken down into categories of Academic, Personal/Family, or Social/Peer. If the request was one of non-emergency the student may have been given a later appointment.

When appointments were not given to students for Academic concerns it came out to be 26% were turned away over the duration of the research study. Those with Personal/Family concerns came in at 38% who were not given immediate appointments. Social/Peer issues ranked in at 36%. These students were given appointments but not at the time of the walk in and when requested. See Figure 6.

Figure 5.

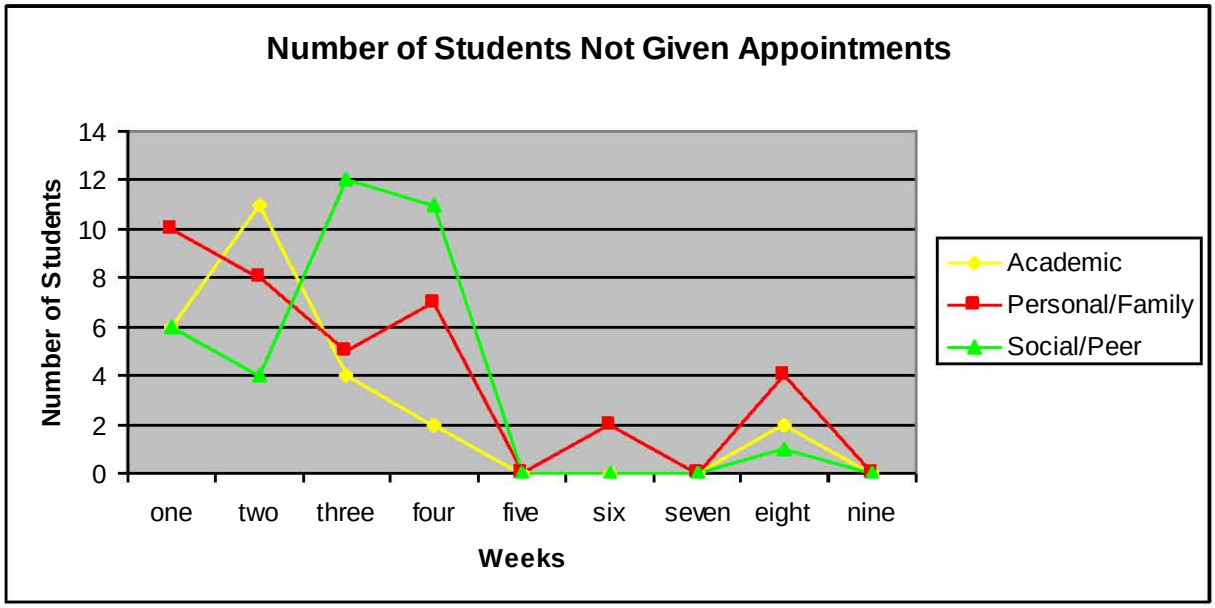
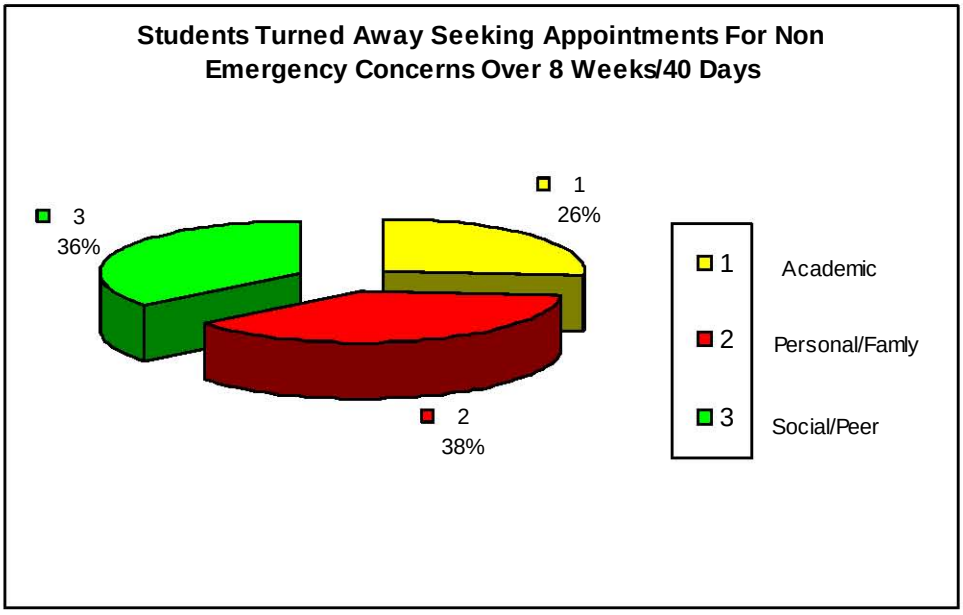



Figure 6.



## Discussion

The idea to pursue this study was inspired by the counselors at the East Irondequoit Middle School. It was a discussion that I had with my site supervisor that triggered the idea to document and identify what types of issues students came in to be seen for. There had been attempts to document what the school counselor did at the middle school but I had wanted to show the specific issues for the students on a scheduled and unscheduled basis and then obtain the counselor's opinions based on the data. This researcher was dependant on the counselor's commitment to document the data each time a student came in to see the counselor, whether it was a scheduled or unscheduled appointment. Over the 8 week/40 day period I waited and frequently reminded the counselors to keep up with the data collection packet (see Appendix A) because if this were neglected, then some of the data would be inaccurate.

At the end of the 8 week/40 day period when the completed data packets were collected, I observed that the tabulation in the weeks closer to the end of the school year seemed to be somewhat nonexistent (See Table 1 and Table 2). This was one of my concerns at the onset of this research study. When the data collection packet was created, I had hoped to make it visually appealing and user friendly. I can appreciate the fact that the counselor's time is limited and to ask them to take on another responsibility may not be at the top of their list. Based on my observations of the data collection packet not having as much data as I had hoped, I had concluded that the packet may have been forgotten about or neglected. What I had come to realize was that there could have been days when the counselor was not in the building, holiday/day off, professional development, ambassador training off site. These should have been taken into consideration as well when the data was documented.

As one of the counselors stated in the response to open ended question one, had this survey been done mid year then the numbers would have been significantly higher and the time to see the students would have been more strained. This reflects a limitation as well as a recommendation. If this were to be done again, it would be recommended to pursue this research study at the beginning of the school year as well as towards the end of the school year to obtain some comparative data so that the demands of the counselor could be identified. This information could become valuable to the counselors because then there would be a clearer understanding as to the demands of the school counselors during more specific times of the year and possibly plan accordingly.

The confirmation that the scheduled appointments would primarily entail academic concerns (26%) such as schedules made sense. The second highest percentage for the scheduled appointments was a combined group of issues made up as OTHER with 11%. This category included team meetings, 504 parent conferences, and more of the academic concerns.

The time that I spent at the middle school with the students, I had observed that many of the issues on a walk in basis had to do with issues of their peers. A topic of concern during the internship and working with these students was the issue of mediation. For the unscheduled appointments the top 5 category issues dealt with social/peer concerns. These were peer relationships with 17%, bullying at 12%, mediation at 11% and student behaviors of disruption at 8% and aggression/conduct at 7%.

Based on these findings I concluded that with the scheduled appointments, academics was significantly ahead in percentage of the others that were anxiety at 10%, peer relationships at 9%, and family stress at 6%. Compared to the unscheduled where the results were closer in range and more closely related to the others.

The data that was documented by the secretary regarding the students turned away due to counselor unavailability (see Figure 6) was surprising but then again expected. I say this because I would have thought that the percentage for students turned away would be lower for the social/peer concerns and higher for the academics. After more reflection on this, I came to the conclusion that the students who came in for a walk in appointment regarding academics could be seen and their issue resolved in a timelier manner than that of an issue with a peer. It then made sense to me that the issues that seemed to be in higher demand required more time and often could not be planned or scheduled in advance.

Based on my experience at East Irondequoit Middle School I had concluded that students require guided attention regarding their social skills and peer relations. Children need to learn academically but as well learn social skills and building relationships. In order for an equal balance, there needs to be an understanding that these two have to coexist. Children cannot learn academics if they cannot get along with their peers.

I do not believe that the data that was documented and collected and analyzed came as a surprise to these counselors. They know what it is that they do in a day, week, month, and year with these students and I believe that they do it well. I see the frustration, and I've heard it from them that they are over worked and misunderstood as to what their role is as a school counselor. There is no confusion as to what they need to do, the question is how will they get it all done that has become the issue.

Data collection is key in the clarification of the school counselor's role. Today's school counselors must have the accountability to define what their role is. I had assumptions as to what kids issues were and I found that my assumptions were fairly accurate. What I did

conclude was that choosing this research study allowed me to see it all on paper. It was the collection of data and asking the questions to the counselors. What I did see on paper was that their answers were all very similar. Time and more of it is needed, the expectations and demands placed on them are high and just trying to keep up with the job was challenging.

## Recommendations and Limitations

The first recommendation is to set up a plan for data collection within the counseling department to account for the role each school counselor has in the school. An idea may be to include the teachers in a survey as to what they believe is the role of the school counselor. Ask in that teacher survey what it is that they would like from the counselors. I believe that there needs to be more communication between teachers, administration and counselors as to how everyone can work together to benefit the student because it really is about student success.

A limitation that I found within the school is that school counselors are misunderstood as to how they can help the student succeed. Teachers or administrators may believe that a student coming down to the counseling office is a way to 'blow off' class.

Another limitation of data collection was that there was a dependency on the other counselors to do their part. If everyone is not on board and has the same goals then the counseling department cannot be a cohesive unit.

"As the profession-and school counselors themselves-continues evolving, the students benefit even more," (Viccora, 2006b, p.11).

## Summary

The aim of this research was to identify what it is to be a school counselor and identify ways to show our worth. When schools are discussed the primary figures are the teachers.

School counselors have often been put in the background when their role has been proven to be extremely important, just as important as the role of the teacher in a child's education. Sink (2002) quoted Helen Heffernan (as cited in Froehlich, 1958), an elementary school principal, in his article. She stated:

> "education must take the child where he is and help him to make increasingly more effective adjustments to his environment. The process by which education helps children to become happy, wholesome, self-controlled, self-directed, and socially minded persons is called guidance. The purposes of guidance and the purposes of education are identical because education is guidance ."

It all comes back to school counselor accountability. Accountability is tied to student success; career and personal/social goals are linked to academic achievement; and case studies and examples through the research of data enable school counselors to clarify their roles and functions (Myrick, 2003).

In order to show our worth as school counselors we need to count. Literally.

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Table 1

*Data Documented by Counselors Based on Scheduled Issues Seen For Over 8 Weeks/40 Days*

Scheduled

| Week | one | two | three | four | five | six | seven | eight | nine | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Absenteeism | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| Academics | 16 | 7 | 5 | 18 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 5 | **65** |
| Agression/Conduct | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | **7** |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | **2** |
| Anxiety | 4 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | **25** |
| Bullying | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | **8** |
| Child Abuse/Violence | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **4** |
| Depression | 3 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | **10** |
| Disruption | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | **2** |
| Divorce | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| ESOL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| Family Stress | 5 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | **14** |
| Financial Issues | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Impulsivity | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| Job Loss | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| Learning Disability/ ADD | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| Mediation | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | **12** |
| Parents/Stepfamilies | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **5** |
| Peer Relationships | 5 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 8 | 0 | **24** |
| Poverty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| Self-Esteem | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | **7** |
| Special Ed. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | **8** |
| Sexual Behavior | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | **7** |
| Suicidial Behavior/Thoughts | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | **8** |
| Transfer In/Out | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | **5** |
| Group Counseling | 7 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **9** |
| OTHER | 1 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 8 | 0 | **27** |
| **TOTAL** | **59** | **31** | **22** | **38** | **20** | **22** | **11** | **42** | **9** | |

Table 2

*Data Documented by Counselors Based on Unscheduled Issues Seen For Over 8 Week/40 Day*

Unscheduled

| Week | one | two | three | four | five | six | seven | eight | nine | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Absenteeism | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Academics | 3 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 29 |
| Agression/Conduct | 2 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 35 |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 13 |
| Anxiety | 2 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 22 |
| Bullying | 9 | 15 | 2 | 12 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 7 | 4 | 60 |
| Child Abuse/Violence | 1 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 19 |
| Depression | 5 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 23 |
| Disruption | 1 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 11 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 38 |
| Divorce | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| ESOL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Family Stress | 5 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 22 |
| Financial Issues | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Impulsivity | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 13 |
| Job Loss | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Learning Disability/ ADD | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Mediation | 5 | 8 | 5 | 12 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 11 | 0 | 52 |
| Parents/Stepfamilies | 2 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 22 |
| Peer Relationships | 12 | 18 | 11 | 16 | 16 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 85 |
| Poverty | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Self-Esteem | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 |
| Special Ed. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Sexual Behavior | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Transfer In/Out | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Group Counseling | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| OTHER | 1 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 15 |
| **TOTAL** | 58 | 107 | 48 | 74 | 78 | 37 | 24 | 41 | 19 | |

Table 3

*Data Documented by Secretary Based on Students Who Were Not Given Appointments at Time of Walk In.*

**Secretary Data**
**Students Not Given Appointments**

| Week | one | two | three | four | five | six | seven | eight | nine | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | 6 | 11 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 25 |
| Personal/Family | 10 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 36 |
| Social/Peer | 6 | 4 | 12 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 34 |
| | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | 22 | 23 | 21 | 20 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 95 |

Appendix A

DATA COLLECTION PACKET PRESENTED TO COUNSELORS WITH ATTACHED

QUESTIONAIRE REGARDING DATA COLLECTION

Counseling Center Staff,

The purpose of this research project is to identify the issues/concerns that middle school students bring to the Counseling Center. It will also assist in the identification of the needs that middle school students have by identifying whether the appointment with the Counseling Center staff was a scheduled appointment or simply a walk in need.

Enclosed you will find an alphabetized list of issues that are dated weekly, Monday through Friday. For this part of the research, I am asking that you keep a daily record of data for a period of 8 weeks or 40 days by checking in the appropriate space the issue(s) that students come in with. The students are to remain anonymous and all information is to be kept confidential. I am not interested in who the students are but only what their counseling concerns are.

At the completion of the 8 weeks/40 days of data collection, please find an optional questionnaire with a series of 5 open-ended questions that assess your opinion/beliefs about your findings and the importance of the Counselor's role. Please consider completing this form as well.

When completed please return packet to Michelle Kells.

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

| | Monday **April 24** | Tuesday **April 25** | Wed. **April 26** | Thurs. **April 27** | Friday **April 28** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sched. Unsched. | Sched. Unsched. | Sched. Unsched. | Sched. Unsched. | Sched. Unsched. |
| Absenteeism | | | | | |
| Academics | | | | | |
| Aggression/Conduct | | | | | |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse | | | | | |
| Anxiety | | | | | |
| Bullying | | | | | |
| Child Abuse/ Violence | | | | | |
| Depression | | | | | |
| Disruption | | | | | |
| Divorce | | | | | |
| ESOL | | | | | |
| Family Stress | | | | | |
| Financial Issues | | | | | |
| Impulsivity | | | | | |
| Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior | | | | | |
| Job Loss | | | | | |
| Learning Disability/ADD | | | | | |
| Mediation | | | | | |
| Parents/Stepfamilies | | | | | |
| Peer Relationships | | | | | |
| Poverty | | | | | |
| Self-Esteem | | | | | |
| Special Ed. | | | | | |
| Sexual Behavior | | | | | |
| Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts | | | | | |
| Transfer In/Out | | | | | |
| GROUP COUNSELING | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | |

**NOTES:**

Week of April 24, 2006 to April 28, 2006

| | Monday **May 1** | | Tuesday **May 2** | | Wed. **May 3** | | Thurs. **May 4** | | Friday **May 5** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. |
| Absenteeism | | | | | | | | | | |
| Academics | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aggression/Conduct | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anxiety | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bullying | | | | | | | | | | |
| Child Abuse/ Violence | | | | | | | | | | |
| Depression | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disruption | | | | | | | | | | |
| Divorce | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESOL | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Stress | | | | | | | | | | |
| Financial Issues | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsivity | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Job Loss | | | | | | | | | | |
| Learning Disability/ADD | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mediation | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parents/Stepfamilies | | | | | | | | | | |
| Peer Relationships | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poverty | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Esteem | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special Ed. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sexual Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transfer In/Out | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP COUNSELING | | | | | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | | | | | |

**NOTES:**

Week of May 1, 2006 to May 5, 2006

| | Monday **May 8** | | Tuesday **May 9** | | Wed. **May 10** | | Thurs. **May 11** | | Friday **May 12** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. |
| Absenteeism | | | | | | | | | | |
| Academics | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aggression/Conduct | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anxiety | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bullying | | | | | | | | | | |
| Child Abuse/ Violence | | | | | | | | | | |
| Depression | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disruption | | | | | | | | | | |
| Divorce | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESOL | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Stress | | | | | | | | | | |
| Financial Issues | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsivity | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Job Loss | | | | | | | | | | |
| Learning Disability/ADD | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mediation | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parents/Stepfamilies | | | | | | | | | | |
| Peer Relationships | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poverty | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Esteem | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special Ed. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sexual Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transfer In/Out | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP COUNSELING | | | | | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | | | | | |

**NOTES:**

Week of May 8, 2006 to May 12, 2006

| | Monday **May 15** | | Tuesday **May 16** | | Wed. **May 17** | | Thurs. **May 18** | | Friday **May 19** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. |
| Absenteeism | | | | | | | | | | |
| Academics | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aggression/Conduct | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anxiety | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bullying | | | | | | | | | | |
| Child Abuse/ Violence | | | | | | | | | | |
| Depression | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disruption | | | | | | | | | | |
| Divorce | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESOL | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Stress | | | | | | | | | | |
| Financial Issues | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsivity | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Job Loss | | | | | | | | | | |
| Learning Disability/ADD | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mediation | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parents/Stepfamilies | | | | | | | | | | |
| Peer Relationships | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poverty | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Esteem | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special Ed. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sexual Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transfer In/Out | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP COUNSELING | | | | | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | | | | | |

**NOTES:**

Week of May 15, 2006 to May 19, 2006

| | Monday **May 22** | | Tuesday **May 23** | | Wed. **May 24** | | Thurs. **May 25** | | Friday **May 26** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. |
| Absenteeism | | | | | | | | | | |
| Academics | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aggression/Conduct | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anxiety | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bullying | | | | | | | | | | |
| Child Abuse/ Violence | | | | | | | | | | |
| Depression | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disruption | | | | | | | | | | |
| Divorce | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESOL | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Stress | | | | | | | | | | |
| Financial Issues | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsivity | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Job Loss | | | | | | | | | | |
| Learning Disability/ADD | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mediation | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parents/Stepfamilies | | | | | | | | | | |
| Peer Relationships | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poverty | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Esteem | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special Ed. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sexual Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transfer In/Out | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP COUNSELING | | | | | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | | | | | |

**NOTES:**

Week of May 22, 2006 to May 26, 2006

| | Monday **May 29** | | Tuesday **May 30** | | Wed. **May 31** | | Thurs. **June 1** | | Friday **June 2** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. |
| Absenteeism | | | | | | | | | | |
| Academics | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aggression/Conduct | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anxiety | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bullying | | | | | | | | | | |
| Child Abuse/ Violence | | | | | | | | | | |
| Depression | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disruption | | | | | | | | | | |
| Divorce | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESOL | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Stress | | | | | | | | | | |
| Financial Issues | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsivity | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Job Loss | | | | | | | | | | |
| Learning Disability/ADD | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mediation | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parents/Stepfamilies | | | | | | | | | | |
| Peer Relationships | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poverty | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Esteem | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special Ed. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sexual Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transfer In/Out | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP COUNSELING | | | | | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | | | | | |

**NOTES:**

Week of May 29, 2006 to June 2, 2006

| | Monday **June 5** | | Tuesday **June 6** | | Wed. **June 7** | | Thurs. **June 8** | | Friday **June 9** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. |
| Absenteeism | | | | | | | | | | |
| Academics | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aggression/Conduct | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anxiety | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bullying | | | | | | | | | | |
| Child Abuse/ Violence | | | | | | | | | | |
| Depression | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disruption | | | | | | | | | | |
| Divorce | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESOL | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Stress | | | | | | | | | | |
| Financial Issues | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsivity | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Job Loss | | | | | | | | | | |
| Learning Disability/ADD | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mediation | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parents/Stepfamilies | | | | | | | | | | |
| Peer Relationships | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poverty | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Esteem | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special Ed. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sexual Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transfer In/Out | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP COUNSELING | | | | | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | | | | | |

**NOTES:**

Week of June 5, 2006 to June 9, 2006

| | Monday **June 12** | | Tuesday **June 13** | | Wed. **June 14** | | Thurs. **June 15** | | Friday **June 16** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. |
| Absenteeism | | | | | | | | | | |
| Academics | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aggression/Conduct | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anxiety | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bullying | | | | | | | | | | |
| Child Abuse/ Violence | | | | | | | | | | |
| Depression | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disruption | | | | | | | | | | |
| Divorce | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESOL | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Stress | | | | | | | | | | |
| Financial Issues | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsivity | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Job Loss | | | | | | | | | | |
| Learning Disability/ADD | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mediation | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parents/Stepfamilies | | | | | | | | | | |
| Peer Relationships | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poverty | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Esteem | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special Ed. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sexual Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transfer In/Out | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP COUNSELING | | | | | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | | | | | |

**NOTES:**

Week of June 12, 2006 to June 16, 2006

| | Monday **June 19** | | Tuesday **June 20** | | Wed. **June 21** | | Thurs. **June 22** | | Friday **June 23** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. | Sched. | Unsched. |
| Absenteeism | | | | | | | | | | |
| Academics | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aggression/Conduct | | | | | | | | | | |
| Alcohol/Drug Abuse | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anxiety | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bullying | | | | | | | | | | |
| Child Abuse/ Violence | | | | | | | | | | |
| Depression | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disruption | | | | | | | | | | |
| Divorce | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESOL | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Stress | | | | | | | | | | |
| Financial Issues | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsivity | | | | | | | | | | |
| Impulsive/Dangerous Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Job Loss | | | | | | | | | | |
| Learning Disability/ADD | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mediation | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parents/Stepfamilies | | | | | | | | | | |
| Peer Relationships | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poverty | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Esteem | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special Ed. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sexual Behavior | | | | | | | | | | |
| Suicidal Behavior/Thoughts | | | | | | | | | | |
| Transfer In/Out | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP COUNSELING | | | | | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | | | | | |

**NOTES:**

Week of June 19, 2006 to June 23, 2006

## Questions Regarding Data Collection Results

These questions are ***optional*** and if you choose to answer, please do so after you've completed your data collection. If additional space is required use back of paper or add as needed.

1. Based on the data you've collected, was there anything in particular that stood out for you? Do you believe that you were able to service the needs of the students you saw in the amount of time that you saw them?

2. What do you believe are your perceptions of your role as a counselor in your school? What are they and who/where do they come from?

3. Is there any particular area in your role as a school counselor that you believe is lacking? Where do you see the biggest need?

4. What is the most challenging part about being a counselor in your middle school?

5. What do you find to be the biggest reward or the most fulfilling part of being a counselor in your middle school?

Appendix B

DATA COLLECTION PACKET PRESENTED TO COUNSELING CENTER SECRETARY

Counseling Center Secretary,

The purpose of this research project is to identify the issues/concerns that middle school students bring to the Counseling Center. It will also assist in the identification of the needs that middle school students have by identifying whether the appointment with the Counseling Center staff was a scheduled appointment or simply a walk in need.

Enclosed you will find issues for which students request to see counselors. With this part of the research, I am asking that you keep a running tab of the students who were not given appointments for the day of the walk in request. This is to take place during a period of 8 weeks/40 days.

At the completion of the data collection, please return packet to Michelle Kells.

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

| | **MONDAY APRIL 24** | **TUESDAY APRIL 25** | **WEDNESDAY APRIL 26** | **THURSDAY APRIL 27** | **FRIDAY APRIL 28** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | | | | | |
| Personal/ Family | | | | | |
| Social/ Peer | | | | | |

| | **MONDAY MAY 1** | **TUESDAY MAY 2** | **WEDNESDAY MAY 3** | **THURSDAY MAY 4** | **FRIDAY MAY 5** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | | | | | |
| Personal/ Family | | | | | |
| Social/ Peer | | | | | |

| | **MONDAY MAY 8** | **TUESDAY MAY 9** | **WEDNESDAY MAY 10** | **THURSDAY MAY 11** | **FRIDAY MAY 12** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | | | | | |
| Personal/ Family | | | | | |
| Social/ Peer | | | | | |

| | **MONDAY**<br>**MAY 15** | **TUESDAY**<br>**MAY 16** | **WEDNESDAY**<br>**MAY 17** | **THURSDAY**<br>**MAY 18** | **FRIDAY**<br>**MAY 19** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | | | | | |
| Personal/ Family | | | | | |
| Social/ Peer | | | | | |

| | **MONDAY**<br>**MAY 22** | **TUESDAY**<br>**MAY 23** | **WEDNESDAY**<br>**MAY 24** | **THURSDAY**<br>**MAY 25** | **FRIDAY**<br>**MAY 26** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | | | | | |
| Personal/ Family | | | | | |
| Social/ Peer | | | | | |

| | **MONDAY**<br>**MAY 29** | **TUESDAY**<br>**MAY 30** | **WEDNESDAY**<br>**MAY 31** | **THURSDAY**<br>**JUNE 1** | **FRIDAY**<br>**JUNE 2** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | | | | | |
| Personal/ Family | | | | | |
| Social/ Peer | | | | | |

| | **MONDAY JUNE 5** | **TUESDAY JUNE 6** | **WEDNESDAY JUNE 7** | **THURSDAY JUNE 8** | **FRIDAY JUNE 9** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | | | | | |
| Personal/ Family | | | | | |
| Social/ Peer | | | | | |

| | **MONDAY JUNE 12** | **TUESDAY JUNE 13** | **WEDNESDAY JUNE 14** | **THURSDAY JUNE 15** | **FRIDAY JUNE 16** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | | | | | |
| Personal/ Family | | | | | |
| Social/ Peer | | | | | |

| | **MONDAY JUNE 19** | **TUESDAY JUNE 20** | **WEDNESDAY JUNE 21** | **THURSDAY JUNE 22** | **FRIDAY JUNE 23** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | | | | | |
| Personal/ Family | | | | | |
| Social/ Peer | | | | | |