



**A Framework for School Counselling Programs
in the Northwest Territories
January 2004**



Honouring the Spirit of Our Children

A Framework for School Counselling Programs in the Northwest Territories

January 2004



Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment

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A World View

The Honouring the Spirit of Our Children Framework and Handbook assume the world views represented in Dene Kede and Inuuqatigiit: that everyone has a role to play in the healthy development of children. It is only through the cooperation and collaboration of the community that children can reach their full potential.

Dene Kede Education: A Dene Perspective

The Dene Kede Mission Statement: The Child
Among the Dene, it is said the child is born with a Drum in its hand...The child is born with integrity. The child has worth. It is the birthright of the Dene child to be acknowledged and respected for this. The child who is not respected cannot become what it is meant to be.



Inuuqatigiit The Curriculum From the Inuit Perspective

The Inuit World View

What is the most important value? Elders, parents and people of many races and cultures will say “respect”. Respect for ourselves, for others and for the environment. From this important value will follow others, such as pride, self-esteem, independence and a willingness to learn, contribute, share and have a welcoming nature.

Dene Kede Concepts: The Child is Our Future

Dene elders have said that the child is born grasping the Drum. The child is holding in the palm of its hands the accumulated knowledge, skills and perspectives of the Dene. This drum ensures the continuation of the Dene as a people. The child becomes the community and the community is the future of the people. The child is therefore the future.

Each Child is Unique

Each child is unique in talents and abilities. The task of those around the growing child is to provide experiences which will enable the child to become what it is meant to be. The right way is shown and explained to the child, and in some cases, decisions must be made for the child to ensure survival. But, in the end, it will be up to each child to choose what is right for itself. If the appropriate experiences are given the child, the child will develop the basic skills required for survival, as well as those special gifts that make him or her unique. It must be remembered that the gifts come in many forms. For some it may be the gift of special skills on the land, and for another it may be the gift of laughter.

What do Inuit Value?

Inuit have strong ties with their family through elders and kinship. The unity of a family or group is important to the community structure. Children are raised not only by their immediate family, but by extended family and the community. Taking care of the family comes before most other things in life.

What Are The Ways of Children?

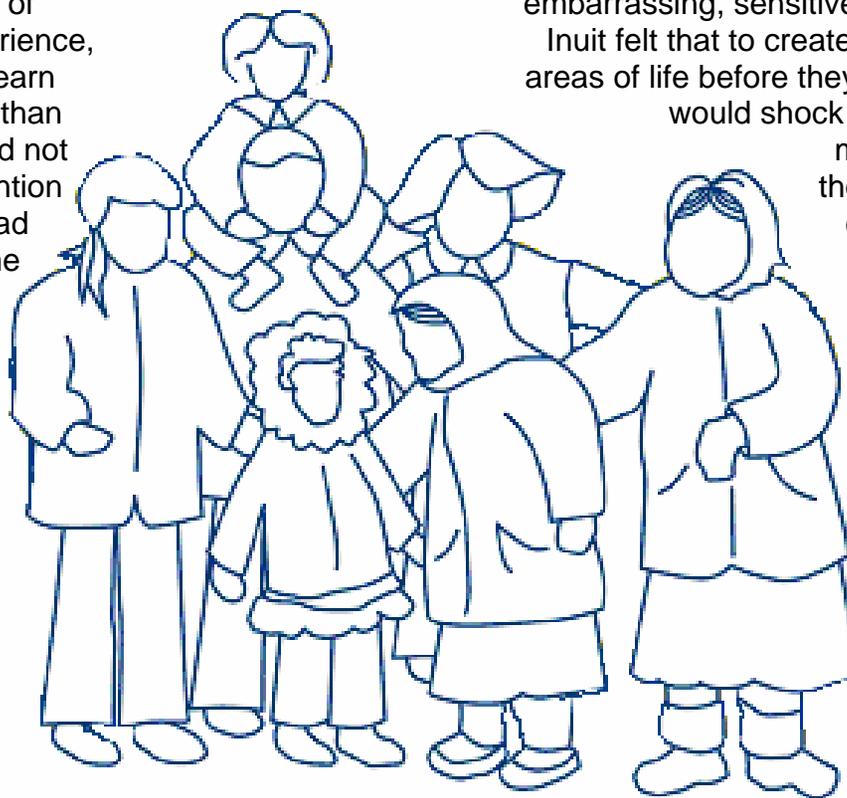
All children need security, identity, purpose, attention, love and curiosity. If children are praised, encouraged and respected, they will feel special and have a sense of belonging. They need to relate their learning to their family and surroundings and to be given opportunities to try different things. Children need to have parents and families interested and involved in their school life. Children want to be believed, heard, understood, happy, independent and have friends. They want responsibilities and tasks that have importance and meaning, and to get feedback that makes them feel proud and gives them a sense of achievement.



Dene Kede

Trust in the Child

Because there was a belief in the inherent integrity of the child, from the time it could walk the child was given the respect of being its own person. This respect took the form of trust in the child's natural curiosity to learn and the child's need to learn. The Dene child responded to this trust by constantly challenging and motivating itself to new levels of accomplishment. In any experience, the child could be trusted to learn what it was ready for. Rather than focusing on what the child had not yet learned or mastered, attention was given to what the child had accomplished. Because of the constant focus upon survival, there were few children who did not rise to the challenge of becoming fully who they were meant to become.



Inuuqatigiit

What Are Our Values About Parenting?

The whole camp or community took part in rearing a child. Parents had clear expectations for the child, preparing them for their future responsibilities and everyone knew these expectations.

Adults were cautioned not to gossip or talk about embarrassing, sensitive, or bad events around children. Inuit felt that to create curiosity in a child about certain areas of life before they were old enough to understand would shock the child into maturity before the mind or soul was ready. This was thought to be immensely cruel to a child. Some stories were not told around children until adults felt they were old enough to hear them. There were certain stories told around children teaching a moral, that were used as cautionary tales to guide a child to good behaviour.

A Framework for School Counselling

A Framework for School Counselling Programs will address the issues presented in *Strengthening Support 2001: A Response to the Student Support Needs Assessment* (Education, Culture and Employment, 2000) as a guide to future direction for school counselling in the Northwest Territories.

Based on extensive surveys of NWT school staff, this document identifies the expansion of school counselling as the second highest priority for student support in the NWT. To facilitate this expansion, *Strengthening Support 2001* states that "...the Department of Education, Culture and Employment will:

- ⊙ partner with Aurora College to develop and offer a counselling program and a certificate in counselling
- ⊙ provide in-service to counsellors who are currently working in schools and communities
- ⊙ work with Education Operations and Development Division, ECE to set qualifications standards for counsellors
- ⊙ identify core courses which counsellors can access which apply to a variety of positions in the community caregiver field
- ⊙ coordinate with Health and Social Services to explore 'ladder' type training from which counsellors are able to benefit
- ⊙ develop a plan to attract secondary students to the Counsellor program (Page 13)"

A Framework for School Counselling Programs is designed to:

- ⊙ enhance direct counselling services in schools to children, youth and families
- ⊙ provide guidelines for the design and implementation of School Counselling Programs
- ⊙ determine the most effective ways to provide training and development services and resources to School Counselling Programs

“It is clear that schools remain a crucial social institution for the education of children in preparation for life. But they need to be more involved in a broader educational role fostering healthy social and emotional development of pupils.”

**World Health Organization:
Strengthening Mental Health Promotion**
November 2001

Regarding Student, Behaviour, Attendance and Tardiness, *Strengthening Support 2001* reports that the “...Department of Education, Culture and Employment will:

- ⊙ provide in-service to counsellors who are currently working in schools and communities as to:
 - appropriate models of counselling for our student population
 - examine how counselling fits into Effective Behavioural Support (EBS)”

Independent reviews of the School Community Counsellor program in 1990 and 1996, and surveys and discussions with school counselling and other school and local authority staff also identify some requirements for enhancing school counselling programs. These include:

- ⊙ definition of roles and responsibilities
- ⊙ increased contact with parents
- ⊙ partnerships with community agencies
- ⊙ training opportunities
- ⊙ resources for use in programming

In 2001 and in 2002 at the Honouring the Spirit of Our Children Conferences, School Counselling Staff identified their own challenges and concerns. Many of them identified a need to be recognized for the work that they do and be given the opportunity to do the kind of work that they are trained for.

This collection of responses seems to indicate that a Framework for School Counselling Programs must promote:

- ⊙ the availability of services to children, youth and families
- ⊙ the role of School Counselling Staff so that they are doing the work that they should be doing
- ⊙ information so that schools and local education authorities understand and appreciate the role of School Counselling Programs and Staff
- ⊙ opportunities for potential and existing School Counselling Staff to increase their knowledge and skills

Counselling and School Counselling

Counselling is often perceived as an individual interaction between a professional and an individual who is experiencing difficulties in his or her personal life. However, counselling is much more - it is probable that every individual and family will access some form of counselling support at some time in life. This support may come from elders, community leaders, religious leaders, family and friends, or it may come from trained community agency representatives like social workers, counsellors, or other mental health workers.

School Counselling Programs serve a large and varied population. Potentially, each child and/or youth, their families' of origin, and their guardians if they live with another family can be clients of a School Counselling Program. As well, School Counselling Staff consult with any related school and community programs involved with a child, youth or family. This allows programs and services to be offered to as many individuals and groups as possible given the time and resources available. It also creates a demanding case load that requires knowledge and skills in a wide range of counselling and referral services. Often, the resources of a School Counselling Program are consumed by crisis counselling, short-term interventions and referrals.

Ideally, School Counselling Programs should focus on prevention. Information and services can be offered to children, youth, families, and communities in a variety of ways, and link many and varied individuals and groups. Whole populations can be involved, or targeted groups or individuals can be offered more specific information and support. To enhance current School Counselling Programs and allow the focus to shift to prevention, support is required at the territorial, regional, school and community level.

“The need for counselling services in NWT schools is well documented. School Community Counsellors fill a vital role in many communities by meeting student needs and by providing an essential liaison between school and community.”

**Towards
Excellence '97:
A Report on
Education in the
NWT
GNWT, 1999**

“...the school-community counsellors mediate between the community and the school in very important ways. They act as brokers between the school and the community. School-community counsellors are important in getting community support for the school. Equally, school-community counsellors help principals and teachers understand the community in ways not possible without the help of someone who understands the local culture.”

**School Community
Counsellor Review**
Nunavut Consulting
January 1996

Because of their interactions with their school population and the community, School Counselling Staff can identify potential risks based on:

- ⊙ individual, family or community behaviours or events
- ⊙ times of year
- ⊙ past relationships and interactions

Because of their knowledge and training, School Counselling Staff can provide information and strategies:

- ⊙ to children, youth, families and communities
- ⊙ that address a variety of individual, family and community issues
- ⊙ that respect the diversity of children, youth and families

Because of their location, School Counselling Programs can

- ⊙ be accessible
- ⊙ be familiar
- ⊙ be accepted
- ⊙ link children, youth, families, schools and communities

Because of their association with schools, School Counselling Programs are considered to be

- ⊙ professional
- ⊙ accountable
- ⊙ a liaison between the school and families
- ⊙ a liaison between schools and community agency programs and services

School Counselling Programs provide opportunities for links and partnerships between many and varied persons and services interested in a child, a youth, a family or a community. They also can provide information and support to individuals and populations that may not access services in other situations.

Counselling in schools has been an important part of student support programming in the Northwest Territories for many years. The Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment recognizes that children/youth, families and communities are important partners in education and appreciates the need to understand, support and acknowledge families and communities as important resources for children and youth. School Counselling Programs provide important links between children, youth, families, schools, and communities, and provide an invaluable source of information and support to children, youth and families, and school and community agency representatives.

School Counselling Programs enhance the services available to children, youth and families in schools. These programs are not limited to the programs and services provided by School Counselling Staff, but include all efforts to identify opportunities, provide support and engage children, youth, families and communities in the school and its programs.

Teachers, Administrators and other school staff play an important role in School Counselling Programs. They are able to identify children, youth and families who may benefit and refer them to School Counselling Staff. They provide the environment and on-going support in the daily programs that encourage inclusion and success for all children and youth. They can also provide continuous contact and communication with families to ensure that families have information and access to School Counselling Programs when needed.

School Counselling Programs are one part of a system that encourages and supports children, youth and families. The more interactive School Counselling Programs are with other staff and programs in the school and community, the more likely it is that all children, youth and families will benefit.

“How does one define mental health?”

It is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stressors of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

**World Health Organization
Strengthening
Mental Health
Promotion
November 2001**

Current Conditions and Concerns

Children, Youth and Families

Several territorial government studies and documents provide information about the current need for counselling services for children, youth and families in the Northwest Territories.

“Educators are all too well aware that the personal concerns which students bring to the classroom have a profound influence on their school performance.....”

The Towards Excellence '01: A Report on Education in the NWT

Based on the reports from Statistics Canada and the NWT Bureau of Statistics, approximately 27% of the total population of the NWT is of school age (5-9 years: 10%, 10-14 years: 9%, 15-19 years: 8%).

Student Support Needs Assessment 2000: Territorial Report

Teachers were asked to respond to the interview question: “What are some of the issues that your students come to class with?” Teachers call attention to a number of issues of which they are aware...

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| ⊙ family stressors | 54% |
| ⊙ addiction/substance abuse | 47% |
| ⊙ parenting issues | 32% |
| ⊙ hunger | 30% |
| ⊙ lack of sleep | 28% |
| ⊙ abuse (physical, sexual, emotional) | 21% |

Student Support Needs Assessment 2000: Territorial Report

Working Together for Community Wellness Draft Strategy for Addictions, Mental Health and Family Violence in the NWT

Compelling statistics about the challenges faced by children, youth and families in the NWT include...

- ⊙ "...50% more Northerners (are) expected to need mental health services by 2008..." (p. 1)
- ⊙ compared to the national average:
 - o "...4 times as many people drink heavily
 - o 2 - 3 times as many people commit suicide,
 - o 8 times as many women are admitted to shelters..." (p. 3)

The Health Behaviours, Attitudes and Knowledge of Young People in the NWT (1996)

This report presents the following challenges...

- ⊙ "...in the NWT, the rate of suicide (43.1 per 100,000) is significantly higher than the Canadian Average of 13 per 100,000...45 percent of these have been young men aged 15 to 24 years of age (GNWT, 1994). (p.9)
- ⊙ by age 11, 7-8% of students report having had sexual intercourse at least once, and by age 17, 85% report having had sexual intercourse at least once.
- ⊙ "For students in both grades 7-8 and 9-10, school was the main source of information about sex and birth control (p.41...and) about AIDS and other STDs...(p.42)
- ⊙ "...students who drink alcohol rises from 12% in Grades 4-6 to 38 percent in grades 7-8...over half of students in grades 9-10 reported drinking alcohol...(p. 48)"
- ⊙ "The percentage of students who smoked in grades 7-8 almost tripled from grades 4-6 – 19 to 53 percent...in grades 9-12 almost half reported smoking cigarettes every day...(p.52)
- ⊙ "...a few students in grades 4-6 (4%) used it (marijuana); nearly a third of students in grades 9-10 did...(p.54)"

"...an awareness of these concerns enables the teacher to better tailor the educational encounter to facilitate learning, but in addition may demand that these concerns be dealt with in their own right for the total well-being of the student."

**Student Support
Needs Assessment
2000: Territorial
Report**

School Counselling Programs

“Attendance at school plays a significant role in students’ academic achievements...” Teachers reported that “... over one-quarter of the student population attends less than 80% of the time, missing an average of one or two days of school a week. The most common reasons for not attending reported by teachers were ‘student chooses not to attend’ and ‘lack of support at home’”

Student Support Needs Assessment 2000: Territorial Report

School Community Counsellors

In 1985, the Government of the Northwest Territories introduced an amendment to the Education Act that provided for the enforcement of the Compulsory School Attendance Provision. With this amendment came the creation of a new position, School Community Counsellor, to help communities implement the provision and improve attendance in their local schools.

Local education authorities were invited to pass a motion adopting the Compulsory School Attendance Provision in schools. Once they did this, they could then apply to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment for a School Community Counsellor position. This position was designed to provide outreach services involving families, staff and community agency representatives, and counselling services including individual, group and referral services. Local education authorities nominated individuals from their communities to participate in the School Community Counsellor training.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment contracted Aurora College to develop a northern, community-based diploma for the training of School Community Counsellors. The program was offered in Fort Smith over a sixteen-month period and graduated 15 School Community Counsellors in 1988. Since then there have been further training programs, in 1988-89, 1990-91 and 1994-95. The last training program began in 1997 through Aurora College in Fort Smith. Eleven students completed this program in June of 1998.

The need for school counselling programs is consistently presented and acknowledged. However, the expectations and possible services are not as consistent. Historically, School Community Counsellors have been linked to attendance. In some instances this link has influenced the expectations of Local Education Authorities and School Administrators, and has limited the practice of School Counselling to administration and enforcement of attendance at school.

School Counselling is most effective when it creates a positive and supportive link between children, youth, families, schools and communities. School Community Counsellors speak of their desire to work closely with parents to foster interest in their child's education and trust in the school and local authority that provides that education. School Community Counsellors comment that although they support the attendance of children at school, they are limited in their practice and support when they are perceived by families and the community as being 'attendance administrators'. This also limits the range of services they can provide to schools, families and communities, as much of their time is focused on monitoring and recording attendance of students.

Over time and in several jurisdictions, there has been a shift in focus regarding the role and responsibility of School Community Counsellors. In some schools, the role has evolved from attendance monitoring to providing more support in the area of community liaison and personal counselling. However, because of the link between School Community Counsellors and attendance, many School Community Counsellors comment that they spend a great deal of time monitoring attendance which leaves little time for prevention and support with families.

Surveys and discussions at the Honouring the Spirit of Our Children Conferences in February 2001 and February 2002 provided valuable insights into the conditions of current School Counselling Programs. School Counselling Staff comment that they need to focus on prevention and family support. They state that they would be most effective working closely with families to educate them about the importance of education and attendance at school. An important element of this is to assist families with routines at home and at school so that families are less stressed, and children and youth can attend school regularly and experience success.

Stronger School Counselling Programs will result in stronger students, families, schools and communities. The issues affecting children, youth, families and communities will determine the work, and the required training and resources of School Counselling Staff. Any level of support and resources targeted at any group or individual will serve to strengthen all other individuals and groups. To be most effective, support and resources must be offered to children, youth and families, and School Counselling Staff by the most effective and efficient means possible.

School Community Counsellor respondents reported that they were required to provide additional services. All 5 respondents reported that they were considered '...a jack of all trades...', and were called on to sub or fill in for other staff, and to respond to a variety of requests from staff and administration that were not necessarily connected to their position.

**School
Counselling
Survey**
February 2002

“....the top (five) priorities for student support presented by teachers: trained classroom support staff (and) counsellors in the school....(page 2)...” and “...the top (five) priorities for student support identified by teachers in the 1993 survey were: counsellors/ counselling services in the school (and) more support staff in classrooms and schools to assist in program planning and implementationThe top two priorities remain the same in the 2000 survey as they were in 1993....”

**Student Support
Needs Assessment
200: Territorial
Report**

School Counselling Programs

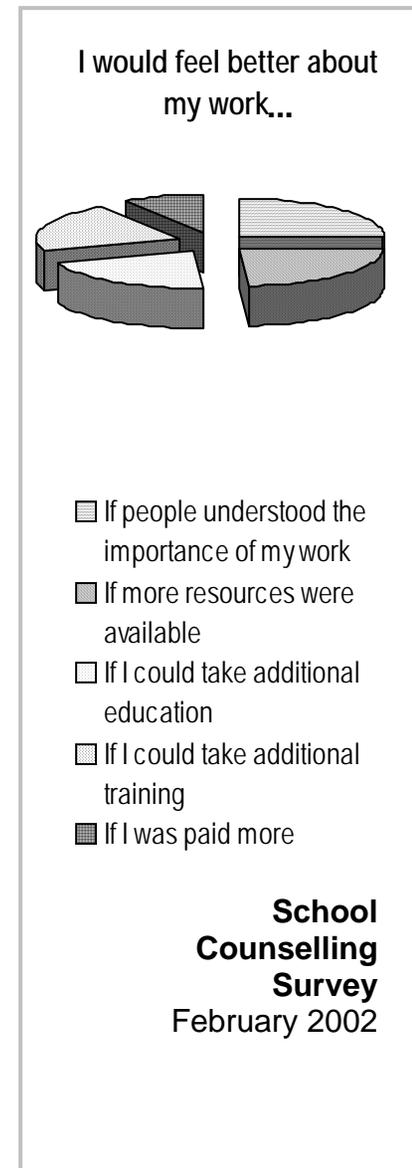
School Counselling Staff must become very creative in how they provide programs and services to children, youth and families.

School Counselling Staff are involved in all aspects of counselling including:

- ⊙ crisis counselling
- ⊙ assessment
- ⊙ individual counselling with children, youth, families
- ⊙ individual counselling with staff
- ⊙ family counselling
- ⊙ group counselling
- ⊙ case management
- ⊙ referrals
- ⊙ advocacy
- ⊙ career counselling
- ⊙ school and community intervention teams
- ⊙ resource development
- ⊙ resource management and referral
- ⊙ prevention programs
- ⊙ education programs
- ⊙ crisis response
- ⊙ incident debriefing
- ⊙ consultation
- ⊙ research
- ⊙ promotions

One of the significant challenges faced by any counselling provider in the NWT is the lack of accessible services and resources. This is also true for School Counselling Staff. Although most School Counselling Staff have some formal counselling training, they constantly deal with new and challenging situations and provide immediate support with limited resources. Although they may recognize the need for a specific program or service, because of limited space in programs or the costs involved in access, they may not be able to provide the most appropriate program or service.

School Counselling Staff are increasingly in need of on-going training and support. They are often the only person providing counselling services in a school, and may have few resources for their children, youth or families, and for themselves in their community. Stress and burnout are constant potential hazards in any counselling work, and isolation, limited resources and a lack of on-going training and development increase the risks of experiencing symptoms of stress. School Counselling Staff speak of their need to be connected to other counselling professionals and to have the training and resources required to do their work effectively.



“Our purpose – or mission, if you prefer, is to provide people with opportunities to learn: to invest in them so they can learn from the past and create their own futures.”

**Our People, Our
Focus for the
Future: A
Strategy to 2010**
September 1994

Schools and Local Education Authorities

It is becoming increasingly difficult to staff positions in School Counselling Programs. In some communities, there may not be enough trained counsellors to service all of the available positions. In some schools, the counselling positions are funded at a percentage of a position. This makes the positions less attractive to qualified workers, and does not give the position time to address the needs of the children, youth, and families. In some cases, School Counselling positions are being filled with individuals without formal counselling training because of the need to have the position filled. As with most other health and social service positions in the North, School Counselling Programs are challenged to fund and fill the required positions.

As well as strengthening the knowledge, skills and attitudes of current School Counselling Staff, ongoing support and training is necessary to recruit and retain people in the role of counsellor at the school and community level.

Government of the Northwest Territories: Education, Culture and Employment: Early Childhood and School Services

Funding

In 1988-89, funding for counselling in schools became part of the block funding formula. Local education authorities receive the funding and can distribute it at their discretion. This allows opportunities to design and implement a variety of counselling programs in schools. Since 1996-97 when local education authorities were given the funding to support the School Community Counsellors positions, school counselling has been funded at a rate of FTE x 0.0032. Local education authorities could decide how to distribute this money.

In some communities, because of the low numbers of students, the funding allowed for only a portion of a position. This made it difficult for schools to attract qualified counselling staff because of the small number of hours available to them. As part of the new Inclusive Schooling funding, as outlined in the amendments to the Education Act, 2000, additional funding has been provided to local education authorities. Each community will receive the equivalent of a .25 position as a base for building a school counselling program. At this time, the two funding sources are provided independently. Eventually, however, all funds for school counselling programs will be combined into the block funding formula.

“It is estimated that counseling was provided to approximately 12% of students in the 1999-2000 school year and that 28% of students required this support.

Counselling has been identified as the second highest priority for student support.”

**Student Support
Needs
Assessment
2000: Territorial
Report**

Values

- o We believe in protecting children's best interest.
- o We believe we can support children by supporting parents and families
- o We understand the value of working together
- o We believe in reflecting the diversity of our country
- o We honour Canada's Aboriginal traditions

A National Children's Agenda – developing a shared vision

May 1999

Student Support Needs Assessment

The Student Support Needs Assessment confirms the need and demand for School Counselling Programs. Children, youth, families, teachers and schools agree that more services are required, and that counselling services are an integral part of educational programs in the NWT.

Honouring the Spirit of Our Children

In 2001 and 2002, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment hosted the Honouring the Spirit of Our Children Conferences which were opportunities for School Counselling Staff and community agency representatives to participate in training and development, networking, and resource sharing. These conferences served to:

- ⊙ bring School Counselling Staff together with other community agency representatives
- ⊙ provide training and development to enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of the counsellors
- ⊙ allow School Counselling Staff to meet in small and large groups to discuss the issues and challenges of their work
- ⊙ provide opportunities for School Counselling Staff to collect information and ideas for use in their programs

Because the Honouring the Spirit of Our Children Conferences focused on front line services and resources, School Counselling Staff were able to gather knowledge and skills that transferred directly to their counselling practice.

Partnerships

To support counselling programs in schools, there is a need for support services in the community to be accessible and available for children, youth and families. “The lack of supports for schools in the areas of community professional services is largely unchanged from seven years ago. The need for counselling and assessment services could be described as critical in some areas. Solutions must be sought at that level also.” (*Student Support Needs Assessment: Territorial Report 2000*) It is critical for government departments, community agencies, and non-government organizations to work together to increase the capacity of families and communities to support their children.

School Counselling Staff share their clients with many other individuals and groups. Because the focus of their work is children, youth and families, they must partner with peers, families, school staff and community agency representatives to implement any program or service. In many cases, the primary goal of the School Counselling Program is to create partnerships that will further support the child, youth and family.

Several factors influence how a School Counselling Staff design a program for a child, youth or family. These include:

- ⊙ Level of immediate crisis
- ⊙ Type and duration of intervention required
- ⊙ Support of family and community
- ⊙ School support
- ⊙ Available resources and services
- ⊙ Referral system

Goals

As a nation, we
aspire to have
children who are:
Healthy physically
and emotionally
Safe and secure
Successful at
learning
Socially engaged
and responsible

**A National
Children’s
Agenda –
developing a
shared vision
May 1999**

“While in-school counseling services, as called for by many teachers, will be of great benefit, such services alone are not likely to respond to the counselling needs of students in light of the fact that issues which affect their school progress are related to community and family situations. ”

**Student Support
Needs
Assessment
2000: Territorial
Report**

Partnerships involve communication and collaboration among all those involved. Partnerships need to be flexible and responsive to the needs and resources in the community. What works well in one community may not work well in another. The goal is to effectively and efficiently identify the needs and provide appropriate services to all children, youth and families as required.

Partnerships require that School Counselling Staff consult with children, youth, families, school and district staff, and community agencies, programs and services. This requires that School Counselling Staff be familiar with available resources and services, and have communication and case management skills to coordinate implementation when required.

A Framework for School Counselling Programs

The Vision

Every child, youth, family and staff in schools in the Northwest Territories will have access to appropriate counselling resources and services when required.

The Objectives

School Counselling Programs will

- ⊙ focus on prevention
- ⊙ reflect the generally accepted ethics and best practice for counselling practice
- ⊙ reflect the Goals of Schooling: physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual goals
- ⊙ be integrated with school-based programs and services
- ⊙ support the mission, goals and objectives of the school and local education authority
- ⊙ be integrated with community programs and services
- ⊙ reflect the cultural diversity found in northern communities and populations
- ⊙ reflect the Framework for School Counselling Programs Model
- ⊙ include a system of accountability



The Model

Our Students, Our Future: An Educational Framework: Goals of Schooling (Government of the Northwest Territories, March 1991) will form the basis for School Counselling Program design and assessment. This document states that students will develop "...knowledge, skills and attitudes in each domain:

- ⊙ Physical goal: To assist in the development of students who understand, actively seek and value their own well-being and that of their fellow citizens
- ⊙ Emotional goal: To assist in the development of students who have positive self esteem, based on a strong sense of their own identity and values; who understand and deal with their feelings; and who face challenges with confidence.
- ⊙ Social goal: To assist in the development of students who interact positively with others, regardless of differences; and who understand, exercise and value social rights and responsibilities.
- ⊙ Intellectual goal: To assist in the development of students who understand and apply thinking and problem solving skills to their everyday lives; who communicate effectively from a broad knowledge base; and who have a desire to be involved in lifelong learning.
- ⊙ Spiritual goal: To assist in the development of students who seek to understand and express their relationships with those aspects of their lives, from which beliefs, values and worldviews emanate.

These goals will serve as the foundation for all programs and services provided by School Counselling Programs. The goals can act as a structure for assessment and intervention of children, youth, families, and for accountability frameworks for school counselling programs and community partnerships.

Goals of Schooling

Our Students, Our Future:
An Educational Framework

Intellectual goal

To assist in the development of students who understand and apply thinking and problem solving skills to their everyday lives; who communicate effectively from a broad knowledge base; and who have a desire to be involved in lifelong learning.

Social goal

To assist in the development of students who interact positively with others, regardless of differences; and who understand, exercise and value social rights and responsibilities.

Spiritual goal

To assist in the development of students who seek to understand and express their relationships with those aspects of their lives, from which beliefs, values and worldviews emanate.

Physical goal

To assist in the development of students who understand, actively seek and value their own well-being and that of their fellow citizens

Emotional goal

To assist in the development of students who have positive self esteem, based on a strong sense of the own identity and values; who understand and deal with their feelings; and who face challenges with confidence.



A Continuum of Prevention

To be most effective, School Counselling Programs must focus on prevention. Prevention is critical to avoiding or limiting situations that may cause short or long term trauma to individuals or groups. Prevention services can be delivered to individuals, and/or small or large groups so can be an effective way to distribute information and support, and to provide service to as many students, family and staff as possible.

Prevention: Information

- ⊙ Focus: prevent a problem from occurring
- ⊙ Target population: entire population of the school or community
- ⊙ Goal: to provide information
- ⊙ Partnerships: appropriate programs and services
- ⊙ Example: class presentation about bullying

Prevention: Short-term Support

- ⊙ Focus: early indication of a problem
- ⊙ Target population: generally involves specific child/youth or small group that shares an experience
- ⊙ Goal: to shorten or lessen impact of a problem
- ⊙ Partnerships: peers, family, school staff, community depending on situation
- ⊙ Example: debrief after a serious bullying situation on the playground

Prevention: Long-term Support

- ⊙ Focus: existing severe problem
- ⊙ Target population: may involve large groups of children/youth
- ⊙ Goal: to determine long term plan to decrease the impact of the problem
- ⊙ Partnerships: interactive across programs and services
- ⊙ Example: school wide plan to decrease bullying on the playground

The Positions

Currently, there are several types of positions and combinations of staff in School Counselling Programs in the NWT. School Counselling Programs range from no specific staff person allocated to perform these duties to schools that have a combination of all positions.

School Community Liaison Worker

School Community Liaison Workers support children, youth and families to promote healthy lifestyles and attendance at school. They may not have formal counselling training but may have the skills and attitudes, and knowledge of the community to facilitate cooperation between families and schools.

School Community Counsellors

School Community Counsellors are familiar with the culture and community in which they work. They are often from the community and speak the language. They can provide services including liaison between schools and families, promoting healthy lifestyles and individual and group counselling services to families. Most School Community Counsellors have completed a college program with some additional training and experience in community counselling agencies.

School Counsellors

School Counsellors provide individual and group counselling services that focus on mental health issues including peer and family relationships, abuse, alcohol and drug use, and school and community concerns. Education Authorities and individual schools have differing philosophies regarding School Counsellors. Some districts have School Counsellors trained and experienced in social work or other counselling disciplines. Others have teachers who have additional training and expertise in counselling service. The philosophy of the district and the direction of the school administration tends to guide the role of School Counsellor.

Guidance Counsellors

Guidance Counsellors are primarily responsible for assisting students with post secondary education and career counselling. Guidance Counsellors are usually placed in high schools and tend to be educated as teachers with additional training and expertise in Senior Secondary requirements, post secondary opportunities and career planning.

District Counsellors

District counsellors are based in one community but are available to any schools in a district. District Counsellors rotate through all schools and will respond to a particular crisis on an as need basis.

Contract Counsellors

Some schools contract with local community counsellors to provide a specific service. This could include support groups for social skills, drug and alcohol use or other high risk behaviours. Community Counsellors are generally in the schools on a short term basis, and do not provide on-going services.

The Partnerships

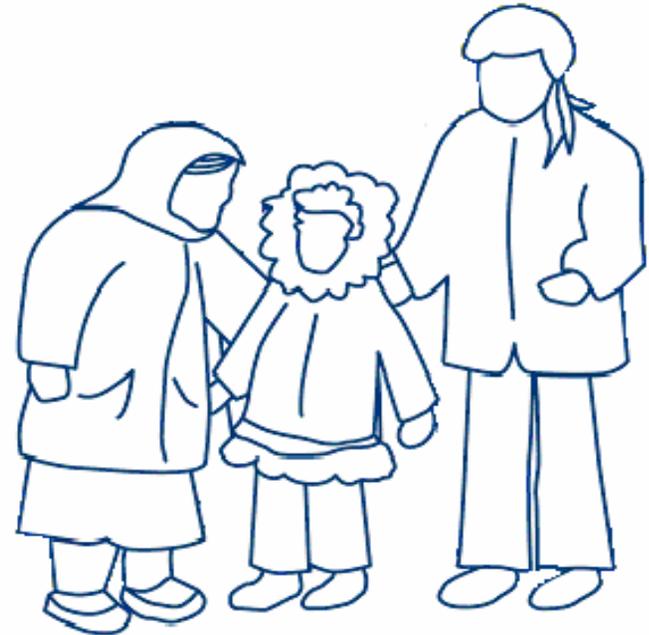
School Counselling Staff work with a variety of partners – individuals and programs that have an interest in providing services to children, youth and families. Each partner plays an important role in any intervention. Successful interventions are those in which each partner understands their role and responsibilities, and the roles and responsibilities of all other partners. School Counselling Staff often act as the link between children, youth and families, and their schools and communities, providing an opportunity for them to create and manage partnerships that are effective and successful.

Children/Youth

- ⊙ Identify their needs
- ⊙ Consent to involvement
- ⊙ Identify areas of strength
- ⊙ Identify personal, family, school an/or community challenges
- ⊙ Work collaboratively to address identified challenges
- ⊙ Consider a variety of strategies to address identified challenges
- ⊙ Report progress

Families

- ⊙ May identify needs of child, youth and/or family
- ⊙ Consent to involvement of child, youth and/or family
- ⊙ Identify areas of strength
- ⊙ Identify personal, family, school and/or community challenges
- ⊙ Work collaboratively to address identified challenges
- ⊙ Consider a variety of strategies to address identified challenges
- ⊙ Report progress





School Counselling Programs Staff

- ⊙ May identify needs of child, youth and/or family
- ⊙ Identify areas of strength
- ⊙ Identify personal, family, school and/or community challenges
- ⊙ Work collaboratively to address identified challenges
- ⊙ Consider a variety of strategies to address identified challenges
- ⊙ Report progress

School Staff

- ⊙ May identify needs of child, youth and/or family
- ⊙ Identify areas of strength
- ⊙ Identify personal, family, school and/or community challenges
- ⊙ Work collaboratively to address identified challenges
- ⊙ Consider a variety of strategies to address identified challenges
- ⊙ Report progress

Local education authority

- ⊙ Encourages parental interest, communication and involvement in School Counselling Programs
- ⊙ Determines local policy, guidelines and priorities for School Counselling Programs within GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment policy, guidelines and procedures
- ⊙ Provides additional assistance, resources and professional development opportunities to facilitate the successful establishment, implementation and evaluation of School Counselling Programs
- ⊙ Provides ongoing support and supervision for School Counselling Staff
- ⊙ Maintains a region-wide liaison with various community and government agencies that either directly or indirectly address the needs of children, youth and families

GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment

- ⊙ Establishes specific policy, guidelines, and procedures to provide direction for School Counselling Programs in the NWT
- ⊙ Assists in the development of suitable resources to support the direction and delivery of School Counselling Programs
- ⊙ Consults with school jurisdictions on School Counselling Program issues
- ⊙ Responds to requests for regional activities in support of the delivery of quality School Counselling Programs

The Community

- ⊙ Participates in interagency collaborative initiatives designed to coordinate services to children, youth and families
- ⊙ Provides specific programs and services designed to meet the needs of children, youth and families
- ⊙ Coordinates opportunities for training and development of School Counselling Staff



The Benefits

Because School Counselling Staff work with a variety of partners they have access to information and resources that may not be available to other partners. They will bring a holistic perspective to each child, youth, family and situation, and will encourage the use of a variety of resources and interventions. School Counselling Staff advocate for children/youth, and for all other partners with children/youth to develop and maintain relationships that promote health and safety in families, schools and communities.

Children/Youth

- ⊙ Provide advocacy
- ⊙ Encourage positive self image
- ⊙ Provide information about issues and challenges
- ⊙ Provide information and support for alternatives and strategies
- ⊙ Promote healthy choices and relationships
- ⊙ Identify resources and supports

Families

- ⊙ Provide advocacy
- ⊙ Provide information about children/youth and parenting
- ⊙ Provide alternatives and strategies
- ⊙ Promote partnerships
- ⊙ Identify resources and supports

School Staff

- ⊙ Provide advocacy
- ⊙ Provide information about children/youth and families
- ⊙ Provide information about community
- ⊙ Promote partnerships
- ⊙ Identify resources and supports

Local education authority

- ⊙ Provide information about children, youth, families
- ⊙ Provide information about community
- ⊙ Provide information about community trends, activities, and challenges
- ⊙ Identify appropriate resources and supports
- ⊙ Promote partnership

GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment

- ⊙ Provide information about children, youth, families
- ⊙ Provide information about School Counselling Programs, Staff, trends, activities, and challenges
- ⊙ Provide information about community trends, activities, and challenges
- ⊙ Identify appropriate resources and supports
- ⊙ Promote partnerships

The Community

- ⊙ Provide advocacy and referrals
- ⊙ Provide information and access to programs, services and activities
- ⊙ Promote programs, services and activities
- ⊙ Promote partnerships

Documents

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