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COUN 6410

ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors Reflection

The ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors provide school counselors with a framework for helping students grow academically, socially, emotionally, and in their career development. The five standards I selected stood out because they connect closely with the type of counselor I hope to become and the needs I expect to see while working with middle and high school students.

Five Mindsets and Behaviors That Interest Me

M1: Belief in Development of the Whole Self

I interpret this mindset as recognizing that students are more than their grades. Their mental health, physical health, relationships, emotions, and sense of belonging all affect how they perform in school. I chose this standard because schools can sometimes focus so heavily on academics that other important parts of a student's life are overlooked.

As a school counselor, I would want to help students understand how sleep, stress, exercise, family relationships, and emotional well-being connect to academic success. One way to use this standard would be through a classroom lesson where students complete a wellness wheel. They could reflect on areas such as school, sleep, friendships, family, physical health, and stress, then choose one small area they want to improve.

M2: Sense of Acceptance, Respect, Support, and Inclusion

To me, this mindset means that students should feel like they belong at school and that both peers and adults respect them. I chose it because students are more likely to participate, ask for help, and take healthy risks when they feel accepted.

As a counselor, I would want to help create a school environment where students from different cultures, family structures, abilities, and backgrounds feel included. This could be addressed through a classroom activity where students anonymously share times when they felt included or excluded at school. The responses could guide a discussion about what students and staff can do to create a stronger sense of belonging.

B-SMS 6: Ability to Identify and Overcome Barriers

I interpret this behavior as helping students understand what is getting in the way of their goals and then finding realistic ways to move forward. I chose it because students often know they are struggling but may not understand why. Barriers could include anxiety, family responsibilities, transportation, learning difficulties, poor organization, or a lack of support.

As a school counselor, I could help students separate the problem from their identity. Instead of believing they are lazy or unsuccessful, they could identify specific obstacles that are making success more difficult. This could be used in a small academic support group where students identify one goal, list the barriers affecting it, and develop one or two practical steps for addressing those barriers.

B-SMS 7: Effective Coping Skills

This behavior focuses on teaching students healthy ways to handle stress, emotions, and difficult situations. I chose it because coping skills can help students in

nearly every area of life, including tests, relationships, family conflict, grief, and major transitions.

As a counselor, I would want students to build several coping strategies rather than relying on only one. These could include breathing exercises, physical movement, grounding, journaling, music, talking with someone, or spending time outside. This standard could be implemented through a small group where students practice a different coping strategy each week and eventually create their own personal coping plan.

B-SS 8: Advocacy Skills for Self and Others

I interpret this standard as helping students speak up for their needs respectfully and appropriately. It also includes supporting others when something unfair or unsafe is happening. I chose this behavior because many students know they need help but may not know how to ask for it.

As a school counselor, I could teach students how to ask a teacher for support, report bullying, set boundaries with peers, or communicate concerns to a trusted adult. This could be practiced through role-play activities where students work through common school situations and practice stating what they need clearly and respectfully.

Five Standards I Would Like to Explore

B-LS 9: Decision-Making Using Evidence and Multiple Perspectives

I would like to explore this behavior because students make important decisions about academics, friendships, activities, and future plans. I want to learn more about helping students slow down, gather information, and consider different perspectives before making a choice.

B-SMS 8: Balance of School, Home, and Community Activities

This standard interests me because many students are overwhelmed by schoolwork, sports, jobs, family responsibilities, and extracurricular activities. I would like to learn more about helping students create balance without making them feel like they have to be successful in every area at once.

B-SMS 10: Ability to Manage Transitions and Adapt to Change

Transitions can be difficult for students. These may include starting middle or high school, moving, changing family structures, or preparing for graduation. I would like to explore ways to create groups or lessons that help students manage uncertainty and adjust to change.

B-SS 4: Empathy

Empathy is important for both counselors and students. I would like to learn more about how to teach empathy in a practical way. Students need opportunities to listen, consider another person's experience, and respond without immediately judging or trying to solve the problem.

B-SS 10: Cultural Awareness, Sensitivity, and Responsiveness

I selected this standard because counselors work with students whose backgrounds may be very different from their own. I want to continue learning how to create counseling lessons and programs that respect different cultures, family experiences, identities, and access to resources.

The ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors give school counselors a useful way to plan lessons, small groups, and individual support. The standards I selected reflect my belief

that students are most successful when they feel included, understand themselves, have healthy coping skills, recognize barriers, and know how to ask for help.

As a future school counselor, I would use these standards to make counseling activities more intentional. I would also want to gather feedback from students and staff to see whether the lessons or groups were actually helping. The goal would not just be to complete an activity, but to help students gain skills they can use in school and throughout their lives.