

Utilizing Solution Focused Brief Counseling with Primary and Middle School Grades: Helping the Perpetrator and the Victim Mitigate Effects of Bullying

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Abstract

This article addresses utilizing Solution Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC) in schools to empower the bully and the victim. The article provides a brief overview of SFBC, addresses SFBC techniques, discusses advantages of utilizing SFBC in the school setting, the issues SFBC addresses, as well as how the modality can be used to assist both victims and perpetrators of bullying.

Keywords: Solution focused brief counseling, bullying, schools, victim, perpetrator.

Introduction: Overview of Bullying

Bullying is defined as an unwanted and aggressive behavior amongst children, adolescents, or adults that involves an imbalance of power. Bullying is typically a repeated behavior and involves badgering or intimidating a person, who can leave psychological scarring years after it ends (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2015).

There are three main types of bullying including Verbal Bullying (teasing, name calling, taunting, threatening to cause harm), Social Bullying (intentionally leaving someone out, telling others not to befriend someone, spreading rumors, humiliating someone in public), or Physical Bullying (hitting/kicking/punching, spitting, tripping, or assaulting someone) (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2015). In addition to verbal, social, and physical bullying, cyber-bullying is another form of bullying that occurs through a medium using electronic technology. People can use cell phones, computers, tablets, social media sites, text messaging, chat rooms or other websites or harass, threaten, spread rumors or say malicious things about others. Cyber bullying differs from in person bullying in that it can happen 24 hours a day 7 days a week due. Additionally, cyber bullying can be anonymous, difficult to trace, and it can reach a wide array of people due to the accessibility of the Internet (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2015).

Bullying is a pervasive problem in schools throughout the United States today and is a form of child abuse that will cause one out of ten students to drop out of high school this year (Cohn and Canter, 2014). According to the Bureau of Justice (2013), teenagers indicated

revenge due to being bullied was the strongest motivation for school shootings. Findings reported that 87% of school shootings are motivated by a desire to "get back at those who have hurt them." Other findings stipulated that 86% of "other kids picking on them, making fun of them or bullying them" caused teenagers to turn to lethal violence in the schools (Bureau of Justice, 2013).

According to recent school bullying statistics and cyber bullying statistics (U.S. News, 2011) students recognize that being a victim of abuse at home or witnessing others being abused at home may cause violence in school. 61% of students questioned about the motivation for school shootings advised that's hootings occur, due to aggressors being victims of physical abuse at home, and 54% percent of students believed that witnessing physical abuse at home can lead to violence in school (Bureau of Justice, 2013).

Additionally, 30% of U.S. students in grades six through 10 are involved in moderate or frequent bullying - as bullies, as victims, or both, according to the results of the first national school bullying statistics and cyber bullying statistics survey on this subject (Bureau of Justice, 2013). School bullying and cyber bullying are increasingly viewed as an important contributor to youth violence, including homicide and suicide.

Furthermore, according to the Bureau of Justice (2013), 1 out of 4 students are bullied in some form. Of those students who are bullied, 77% are bullied mentally, verbally, & physically. Cyber bullying statistics are rapidly approaching similar numbers, with 43% of students experiencing cyber bullying (Bureau of Justice, 2013). Severe reactions to the abuse have been reported by 14% of the 77% of students that said they had been bullied. Additionally, 1 in 5 students admitted to being a bully, or perpetuating some type of "bullying." Each day, 160,000 students miss school for fear of being bullied (Cohn & Canter, 2014). Harassment in the school bathroom is a common fear of 43% of school-age children. More youth violence actually occurs on school grounds as opposed to on the way to or from school. According to Cohn and Canter (2014), 90% of 4th to 8th graders report being victims of bullying. Students who are bullied face a higher risk of experiencing depression, anxiety, having increased feelings of sadness, loneliness, changes in sleep, and may lose interest in daily activities (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2015).

Kotz (2014) reported that researchers from Boston Children's Hospital followed nearly 4,300 children over a five-year period from fifth through tenth grades. The researchers found that 30% of the children studied had been bullied at some point, while those who experienced bullying on a weekly basis were more likely to be in poor mental health and were often more depressed, angry, anxious, or sad compared to those who were never bullied (Kotz, 2014).

The prevalence of bullying in schools and cyber bullying continues to rise. Those who work with school-age children must become invested in solutions for healing not only the victims of bullying, but also the perpetrators of violence and aggression. Statistics show that children who have been bullied experience greater social isolation, as well as suffer from lower self-esteem than those who have not been bullied (Dao, Kerbs, Stephen, Rollins, Potts, Gutierrez, Choi, Creason, Wolf, & Prevatt, 2006). The hope is that working with both groups will help increase cooperation, understanding, and ultimately safety within the nation's schools. According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services (2015) students who bully other students are at a higher risks of abusing alcohol or drugs, initiating or getting involved in fights or dropping out of school, engaging in early sexual activity, and could potentially be abusive in future relationships. Therefore, it is so imminent for counselors to implement SFBC in the school setting, specifically when working with bullies in order to educate and raise the awareness regarding the ramifications of their actions, as well as to help them be less aggressive and more successful personally and professionally.

Solution Focused Brief Counseling

School counselors' time to address critical mental health issues, within the school setting, is limited by their array of job responsibilities. SFBC is present and future based and does not focus on historically deep-rooted issues; rather it is proactive and emphasizes ways to resolve certain issues in a timely manner (Guterman, 2006). It is a type of talk therapy that is student-centered and focuses on encouraging students' to use their strengths and assets in order to achieve their goals (Guterman, 2006). SFBC focuses on finding solutions rather than emphasizing problems. Counselors encourage students to envision their preferred future and assist them in finding ways to make their desired future a reality. Many of the techniques used in SFBC are question based, which enables the student to create their favored future and challenges the student to think about exceptions to perceived problems (Guterman, 2006) in an effort to resolve the issues.

Counselors who utilize SFBC believe that change is constant and thereby helps the student to identify positive directions for change, as well as continue to make changes that are in process that they hope to maintain (Hubble, Duncan, & Miller, 2010). SFBC counselors work to bring small successes to awareness, motivate students to repeat and model successful choices and behaviors that elicit positive outcomes, ask students to be mindful of times when their problems are non-existent or less severe, and encourage them to be aware of what they do differently during these times, as well as facilitate student movement towards goals they have identified (Murphy, 1997).

Utility and Advantages of Using SFBC in the School Setting

Utilizing the SFBC approach, due to its brevity and emphasis on students' strengths and inner resources, assists counselors in helping students problem solve and attain realistic goals in a timely and efficient manner. In accordance with Helseth & Misvaer (2010), students who reported being bullied also reported having a poorer quality of life in comparison to those who were not bullied. Quality of life (one's happiness and well being) is related to support from peers. Peer support (Kendrick, Jutengren, & Stattin, 2012) has been shown to positively enhance emotional well-being. According to Young (2009), the 'no blame' program helps victims of bullying to discuss the bullying problem, in a non-judgmental way, in order to promote a safe and open-minded environment that enables students to communicate and express themselves. The ability to discuss bullying concerns, without fear of criticism is an effective technique. On the contrary, students who have been bullied and don't have a safe venue to elicit their feelings may become introverted and isolate themselves due to fear of rejection (Young, 2009). SFBC focuses on the role of friendship in order to enhance the social and emotional skills of students. It has also been proven that SFBC peer support groups are beneficial (Young, 2009), as they help to minimize isolation, normalize situations, and encourage students to express their concerns and emotions. Young (2009) found that students who attended SFBC support groups felt less frightened, less isolated, more visible, and reported that bullying decreased, since they becoming members of the SFBC support group. The use of SFBC is valuable in school settings, since school counselors rarely see students for long-term counseling (Sklare, 2005). Additionally, change is the essence of counseling in schools. Students typically attend counseling sessions in schools because their parent, teacher, or the student desires a change in their academic performance or behavior (Murphy, 2008). A school counselor's usefulness is measured by their ability to interact with students in a way that encourages change and his or her ability in helping students find viable solutions to problems that exist (Murphy, 2008). SFBC is an effective modality for these purposes.

Understanding Bullying and Victimization in the School Setting

In order to work towards reducing bullying in the school setting, one must first understand the nature of bullying and victimization. Carney (2008) assessed the correlation that exists between exposure to bullying and trauma amongst 6th grade students. Results indicated that high trauma levels were associated with those students who experienced greater exposure to bullying, in that these students suffered from greater levels of anxiety, fear, and disengagement.

Childhood aggression has been considered a significant social problem with potentially serious consequences for aggressors and victims (Guerra & Leidy, 2008). Due to the fact that children spend so much time interacting with their peers, many efforts have been made towards developing school-based programs to address bullying (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). Bullying is defined as “a distinct type of proactive aggression characterized by a power imbalance between the perpetrator and victim that typically involves repetition” (Olweus, 1999). According to Kochenderfer-Ladd & Wardrop (2001), 60% of primary school aged children self-identified as having been a victim of bullying at some time.

Guerra, Williams, and Sadek (2011) conducted a mixed methods study to examine individual and contextual predictors of bullying and victimization and how they vary by age and gender. The researchers collected data from 2,678 elementary, middle, and high school students from 59 different schools and found that changes in bullying and victimization were predicted across gender and age and are impacted by low self-esteem, negative school climate, and normative beliefs. Guerra et al., (2011) found that the most robust predictors of victimization were linked to peer victimization, especially amongst students who were non-assertive and socially isolated students who have low self-esteem. Additionally, Guerra et al. also found that school climate made a significant contribution to peer victimization.

Moreover, the researchers noted a correlation between normative beliefs and bullying in that aggressive children were found to have normative beliefs supporting aggression and in turn they acted out in an aggressive manner (Guerra et al., 2011). The researchers also stated that bullying and victimization are associated with characterizations of the school setting in regards to poor school performance, disengagement, and social isolation. Guerra et al. (2011) determined that girls were more likely than boys to be victims of bullying. Survey findings revealed that changes in both bullying and victimization were predicted by declines in self-esteem and increases in negative perceptions of school climate across age and gender. An increase in normative beliefs approving of bullying was the strongest predictor of an increase in bullying, whereas a decrease in self-esteem was the strongest predictor of an increase in victimization.

Utilizing SFBC in the School Setting

Young & Holdorf (2003) found that using SFBC is effective when a student is struggling in a bullying situation as it is empowering for both the bully and victim. The researchers found that using specific SFBC techniques such as exceptions, miracle question, and compliments helped to reduce the likelihood of bullying amongst bullies, as well as reaction to bullying amongst victims. SFBC is a proactive and strengths based modality focused on the present and future and enables students to visualize situations from a myriad of perspectives, helping them to envision issues in a more positive light.

Sample Counselor Responses Integrating SFBC Techniques

According to Alexander (2003), victims of bullying who come to counseling may say the following statements. A school counselor could utilize the following SFBC responses in response:

Statement: ‘I don’t know why this keeps happening to me everyday.’

Response: ‘Does bullying happen every day to you or are there days when it does not happen?’ or ‘Has bullying always been an issue or was there ever a time when it didn’t occur as frequently?’

Statement: ‘I’m not doing anything wrong...and there is nothing that I can do to change what is happening to me.’

Response: ‘What are some things that you do have control over in your life?’

Statement: ‘My whole life is awful. I feel alone.’

Response: ‘Tell me about a time when you felt accepted and have (or do experience) experienced belonging. What was (is) that like for you?’

Statement: ‘I feel defeated.’

Response: ‘I understand that this is difficult and painful, however, do not allow the bullying to control you or bring you down. You possess many positive attributes. Let’s talk about what you do have control over, identify your strengths, and focus on how you can use your strengths to achieve your goals.’

Alexander (2003) also stated that counselors can utilize SFBC to help victims of bullying by encouraging them to have more positive mindsets. Counselors can motivate students to focus on aspects of their life that they do have control over (i.e. their reaction to the bully, not allowing the bully to impact their self-worth, not giving the bully the power to influence their happiness or success). Counselors who utilize SFBC also encourage students to engage in positive self-talk. Rather than saying, ‘I can’t...’ students can say, ‘I will try my best and see if there’s a different outcome.’ Additionally, counselors can assign students to write a good and bad diary about positive and negative things that happen throughout their day in order to monitor their emotions and thoughts.

SFBC Techniques to Help Victims of Bullying

Victims of bullying may experience feelings of shame, anxiety, or isolation, which may negatively impact their sense of self and self-worth. SBFC helps bullied students by encouraging them to identify their strengths and inner resources in order to focus on goal achievement and reduce the likelihood to internalize negative emotions.

Journaling: Counselors can request students who are being bullied to write a daily list of things in which they are grateful and for which they are appreciative (Alexander, 2003).

‘I’ Statements: Another way to empower victims of bullying is to teach them to use ‘I’ rather than ‘You’ statements. Using ‘I’ statements provides students with a sense of ownership of their feelings, which gives them a sense of control. For instance, if a student tells another student, ‘I feel hurt when you tease me...’ the student is verbally expressing him or herself in an assertive manner and taking ownership of his or her feelings.

Assertiveness Training: SFBC teaches victims of bullying to enhance their assertiveness skills. Being assertive also helps to deter students from acting in a passive manner, which could lead to internalization of feelings. Assertiveness includes stating intentions, wishes, and or feelings clearly and directly (Alexander, 2003). Using assertive statements, victims of bullying can learn how to resist manipulation and threats, respond to name-calling, use proper eye contact and body language, leave a bullying situation, boost their own self-worth and confidence, respond to bullies using the planned agreement technique, and remain calm in a stressful situation (Alexander, 2003).

Fogging: This is an assertiveness technique that allows students to handle and cope with insults and reduces the incidence of escalation (Alexander, 2003). Fogging entails agreeing with the bully as far as one is able to rather than the bully providing a response. Fogging is beneficial, as it assists victims in standing their ground rather than running away from or avoiding confrontation (Alexander, 2003). Fogging encourages students to maintain eye contact, to speak clearly and firmly, and to stand in a relaxed position. For example:

Bully: 'You are so stupid'

Victim: 'That's true. I am not as smart as everyone else.'

Bully: 'You are failure.'

Victim: 'You are right....I am not good at anything.'

Fogging allows for little encouragement for the bully to continue, whereas denial or disagreement encourages the bully to continue to attack.

Negative Enquiry: According to (Alexander, 2003) this is a technique that is used to challenge what the bully is saying. Challenging the bully allows the student to process and think about what is being said and the ramifications of their harsh words on a larger scale.

Bully: 'Your clothes are old and nasty. Your parents are poor.'

Victim: 'What is wrong with being poor?'

In this situation, the counselor can encourage the bully to process and think about the impact of hurtful words, prior to verbally attacking a peer.

ICTT: This is an SFBC strategy counselors can teach students to use in order to diminish bullying events (Alexander, 2003).

- *I* (Ignore)-students are encouraged to ignore bullies.
- *C* (Calm)-staying calm helps one to maintain his/her composure and to ignore a person.
- *T* (Tell)-stating that the bully is bothering him/her in an assertive and calm manner.
- *T* (Tell Adult in Charge)-discloses what is occurring to an adult.

As change agents, advocates, and leaders, school counselors need to let bullies know that their behavior is unacceptable, that the bully is accountable for his/her actions, and that there are consequences for their behaviors.

Setting Realistic Goals: This strategy reduces bullying, as it allows the victim to feel in control and empowered over his or her life. Goal setting is amplified through solution-focused conversation about what clients want in the future (de Shazer & Dolan et al. 2006). Thus, goal setting allows the victim to be proactive and take a stance, by demonstrating that he or she will not allow bullying to control his/her life.

Positive Self-Talk and Affirmations: Positive self-talk and affirmations are paramount in enhancing self-esteem (Alexander, 2003). Many students who endure bullying experience low self-esteem due to the emotional, psychological, and physical abuse they may encounter. It is essential that students who are bullied refrain from believing the negative and destructive statements that other peers may be saying to torment them. Engaging in positive self-talk enables students to begin to believe that they are special and extraordinary regardless of what others may say about them (Alexander, 2003).

Focusing on Strengths and Recognizing Positive Values: Bullying victims benefit from focusing on positive assets so that they do not allow spiteful comments to wound them and prevent them from achieving their potential. It is vital for victims of bullying to focus their energy on their talents, natural abilities, strengths, and attributes. Despite others' comments, victims can continue to feel proud about themselves, and focus on accomplishing their goals (Alexander, 2003).

Slow Breathing and Counting: Used to reduce anxiety for bullying victims, breathing and counting allows individuals to relax and gain control of their reactions so that they become proactive rather than reactive, which perpetuates bullying (Alexander, 2003).

Vision Board: Vision boards allow students to envision their preferred future and execute that vision using interchangeable images on a corkboard that represent their short-term goals. Seeing leads to believing which leads to achieving. This technique is helpful for bullied students, since it reframes their focus on things in their life that they can control.

SFBC Techniques to Help Perpetrators of Bullying

Enhancing social skills is imperative for bullies, as they may bully others due to being bullied themselves at home or outside of school, and are projecting their anger and fear onto other students rather than using appropriate coping skills (Young, 2008). Some of the most important virtues that bullies need to learn are responsibility, tolerance, and acceptance.

Role Playing Non-Aggressive Behaviors: Counselors can work with students who bully through role playing and demonstrating non-aggressive behaviors. Many students who bully have poor social and/or communication skills and instead utilize aggressive tactics. Therefore, it is important for counselors to role-play non-aggressive and assertive behaviors with these students so that they can replace inappropriate behaviors with more socially acceptable ones (Young, 2008).

Assertiveness Training: Counselors can encourage bullies to express themselves in an assertive rather than aggressive manner so that they are able to communicate their feelings in a direct, empowering, and constructive way.

Journaling: The counselor can suggest the bully write down positive traits that he or she admires in others and to keep a record of his or her considerate actions on behalf of others. The purpose of keeping a written log is to reinforce positive feelings, emotions, and behaviors; by reframing negative thoughts the bully will reduce destructive behaviors (bullying) and demonstrate more acceptable and healthier behaviors.

Help Students Identify Positive Goals that Aggression is Directed Towards: Students may be bullying other students because they lack appropriate social skills (Young, 2008). Counselors can help students to identify their motives and thus identify positive goals that in which they can redirect their aggression. For instance, if a bully calls another student a 'Nerd who doesn't have friends', perhaps that bully is envious that the student is accelerating in school and he is struggling. If the counselor is able to help the bully recognize that he wants

to be more academically successful, perhaps the student can refocus his efforts on achieving academic success rather than criticizing his classmate.

Leadership Roles: Many bullies victimize others to seek attention even if it fosters a negative response (Young, 2008). Providing bullies with leadership roles is dually beneficial in that the bully is empowered and is given the opportunity to act as a role model to set the example for others to follow rather than to gain notice through fear.

Anger Management: Many bullies are angry about situations in which they have little or no control. Rather than coping with their anger in a constructive manner, the bullies act out in a destructive manner. Placing bullies in anger management groups provides them with the tools and skills that they need to process their emotions, identify deep rooted triggers of anger, and learn coping mechanisms (Young, 2008) which allow them to process their anger in healthy ways instead of projecting their anger onto others.

Building Ties between Students, Parents, and Mentors: All students long to feel supported, motivated, understood, encouraged, and recognized (Young, 2008). It is essential for counselors to act as liaisons and work to connect students who are bullies with positive role models. Research has shown that when students possess more confidence, feel supported, and have a positive outlook on life, they are less likely to embattle their peers (Young, 2008).

Build Conscience: Taking Accountability for Actions: One of the most vital aspects of working with bullies is helping them to recognize their behavior, assume accountability for their behavior, show compassion, and realize that their actions have costs. Students need to be taught to be responsible and recognize that every action has a consequence. Counselors are discouraged from enabling, minimizing, and discounting the impact that bullying behaviors have on other students and work on motivating students to modify unacceptable behavior. The first step of making changes is identifying unhealthy behaviors, taking ownership for actions, and acknowledging the impact of those actions on others (Young, 2008).

Self-Esteem Enhancing Activities: There are some instances in which bullies report having high self-esteem, and may bully others out of a sense of entitlement. However, many bullies suffer from low self-esteem (Young, 2008). Bullies may retaliate to compensate for their own insecurities and lash out at others to feel empowered, since they may feel helpless in their own lives. Therefore, using self-esteem building activities such as using positive affirmations, positive incentives (stickers, prizes, and food), complimenting, acknowledging positive changes ('Wow, I am so proud of how hard you are working for the positive changes you are making!') and providing leadership roles (peer mediators, line leaders, captain of team) are imperative, in order to allow the opportunity for bullies to transform into positive peer leaders and role models who use their power and status to inspire rather than hurt others.

Scaling Questions: Scaling questions allow the clients to evaluate their own progress (Trepper, McCollum, De Jong, Korman, Gingerich, & Franklin, 2010). A counselor can ask a bully, 'On a scale from one to ten, one being the lowest and ten being the highest, how angry/frustrated/sad/scared/ powerless are you feeling today?' Scaling is dually beneficial, as it raises students' awareness about their feelings and how their feelings can impact their behaviors, and it also provides counselors with the knowledge as to whether or not a student is making growth. Additionally, it indicates the degree to which a student is experiencing a strong sentiment so that counselors can help a student to process his or her emotions before becoming reactive (Trepper et al., 2010).

Miracle Question: The Miracle Question allows students to envision their preferred future and to work towards making their dreams a reality. It also helps bullies to focus on bettering themselves rather than on hurting others. For example, a counselor can ask, 'If a miracle occurred tonight and your problems went away, how would you know the miracle had

occurred and what would be different?' (deShazer & Dolan et al., 2006). Encouraging the students to think about a miracle can help them reframe their own situations, give them the strength and will power that they need to overcome challenges they may face, and motivate them to become more accepting and kinder individuals.

Stop and Think About Ramifications: Bullies also need to be made cognizant of the fact that words can cause tremendous harm, especially taunting, teasing, and ridiculing other students verbally, physically, or anonymously (via cyber-bullying) on a consistent basis (Young, 2008). Penalties can include detention, loss of privileges, or expulsion. Another tragic ramification of bullying is the death of a student. Many students today who are consider or commit suicide, as they feel that the bullying will never stop and their lives will never improve. Thus, it is imperative that bullies learn to empathize and recognize the significant influence of how their tormenting inflicts others' lives.

Discussion

Bullying is a pervasive problem that impacts students from all different demographics. It is a school, community, and societal problem that have deleterious effects on one's physical, emotional, and psychological well-being (Hong, 2009). SFBC has proven to be an effective modality to use to mitigate this issue in that it is brief, strengths based, structured, enables student to utilize his or her attributes to attain goals, helps to empower students to take ownership of their feelings, emotions, responses, and encourages them to focus on aspects of their life that they have control over. As leaders and systemic change agents responsible for the academic, personal/social, and vocational wellbeing of students, it would be advantageous for school counselors to be educated and trained on the basic tenets and interventions that SFBC is composed of, so that they can implement this modality when working with victims and perpetrators of bullying. The hope is that through incorporating SFBC into counselors' individual sessions, as well as, anti-bullying groups, bullying within their schools will dissipate.

Suggestions for Future Research

There are several suggestions for future research. Although SFBC has been found to be an effective modality to use to reduce bullying and its negative impact on the school setting, there is a gap in the literature regarding which specific disciplinary strategies are most effective in reducing bullying in the school setting (Hong, 2009). Also, it would be beneficial for counselor educators to conduct research on the impact that SFBC has on bystanders of bullying and its ability to help those who witness bullying to develop assertiveness skills to further decrease bullying in the school setting. Additionally, it would be helpful for researchers to conduct a comparative analysis of schools composed of stakeholders that implement SFBC tactics, and schools that do not have stakeholders who implement SFBC, in order to assess the extent to which SFBC helps to reduce bullying school wide. Furthermore, it would be helpful to assess the effectiveness of using SFBC with victims and perpetrators of cyber-bullying in order to determine the extent to which SFBC reduces online bullying.

Conclusion

SFBC has proven to be an effective modality to use with both aggressors and victims of bullying in the school setting (Alexander, 2003). Due to its brief nature, and its innate ability to help students identify their strengths and inner resources, SFBC helps students to feel empowered, focus on aspects of their lives they have control over, and enables students to set realistic goals based upon their assets. Likewise, it raises bullies' awareness about the reasons as to why they may be bullying students, helps them to feel better about themselves and in turn treat others more respectfully, and enables bullies to become more cognizant about their

impact on others. Ultimately, SFBC teaches bullies and victims to focus on aspects of their lives that they do have the power to change. SFBC emphasizes that the relationship formed with the self, determination, will power, and goal setting are paramount entities in reaching one's potential. SFBC empowers those to capitalize on their personal strengths and to excel in life. Regardless of what others say or do, school counselors need to reiterate to students the significance of perseverance, building upon inner resources in order to attain goals, achieving self-love, as well as self-acceptance, as that is most meaningful and profound.

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