

ASCA

School | counselor

AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016

VOLUME 54 | NUMBER 1

THE CROWDSOURCED ISSUE



COLUMNS

- 4 Inside | Insight
- 6 Legal | Ethical

DEPARTMENTS

- 42 Board | Bulletin
- 43 New | Noteworthy
- 45 Calendar
- 45 Ad Index

12 ADDRESS STUDENT ANXIETY

Learn how to use evidence-based tools and data to help students with anxiety, regardless of their age.

By Mary E. McCormac

18 MOTIVATE STUDENTS

With motivational interviewing techniques and a small-group curriculum, you can improve unmotivated students' chance of success in school.

By Robert Pincus

26 MIND MATTERS

Mindfulness keeps gaining attention, including in a growing number of school counseling offices.

By Jim Paterson

32 ATTENDANCE WORKS

With data in hand and through community collaboration, the Geneva City School District addressed its attendance concerns head on.

By Hennessey Lustica, Susan McGowan and Aaron Backhaus

36 PLAN FOR SUCCESS

Building your school counseling program's annual calendar can be one of the most important tools for an organized, successful school year.

By Debra Brown and Crystal Brewer

40 LEARNING THE RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

What do you get when you combine four days of professional development, nearly 3,000 school counseling professionals and an exciting city? ASCA's biggest – and best – conference yet.



Learn how to use evidence-based tools and data to help students
with anxiety, regardless of their age.

BY MARY E. MCCORMAC

ADDRESSING STUDENT ANXIETY

There is currently a stress and anxiety crisis in our schools. Anxiety, a sense of fear and worry, is the most common mental health challenge facing children, teens and adults. More than a quarter of teens report experiencing extreme stress during the school year. Some stress and anxiety is good, but extreme levels result in students feeling overwhelmed, having health problems related to the release of stress hormones in the body and sometimes even contemplating suicide. Stress is a trigger for anxiety and perfectionism. Without social/emotional education and early intervention, youth often develop unhealthy coping strategies and behaviors to deal with anxiety. These unhealthy behaviors often persist into adulthood.

challenges schoolwide through a mental health awareness day or mental wellness week. Look at the school year, and prepare for peak times of anxiety and stress. For example, the start of a school year or a long break from school can trigger specific behaviors, which can be reinforced by the responses and outcomes that follow the behavior. Pay special attention to students transitioning to a new school, which is a stressor. You may need to implement de-stressing tips and activities during the end of the quarter when many projects are due, tests are given and standardized tests are administered.

For elementary schools these activities could be done in the classroom, and at the secondary level school counselors can set up a play and wellness table in the cafeteria with de-stressing activities, such as coloring mandalas, making stress balls, blowing bubbles, writing positive affirmations on sticky notes and posting them on a bulletin board. Viewing anxiety behaviors as "learned" suggests the school counselor can modify the environmental conditions so problem behavior is less prevalent and occurs less frequently.

Schools are beginning to see the importance of having an evidence-based schoolwide social/emotional program in place. Learn more about these programs at www.casel.org/.

To help prevent anxiety from becoming a concern, teach all students positive self-talk to regulate attention, thoughts and emotions. The best way to teach these skills to all students is through an evidence-based program such as Second Step or MindUp. In these programs all students learn ways to develop emotion regulation through diaphragmatic breathing, accurately identifying feelings and problem-solving skills to handle challenge. By encouraging all students to focus on positive emotions like happiness and teaching them that kindness and compassion make both the giver and receiver more positive, you can help them cope with anxiety. The student, parents and teachers need to reinforce progress toward new, more appropriate skills so they will be repeated. Teachers should try some accommodations and record data on their effectiveness for at least four weeks before referring a student for a Tier 2 intervention.

#1 Happiest students

— Princeton Review

#1 Lots of race/class interaction

— Princeton Review

#4 Best colleges nationwide

— Money Magazine



Unconventional? Not at Rice.

Pretty amazing numbers from some pretty prestigious organizations that study higher education. Specifically Princeton Review's The Best 381 Colleges and Money Magazine's 2016 national list of best colleges and universities. They included comments about the university being "academically rigorous but not particularly stressful," with an emphasis more on "collaboration than competition." Students say,

Rice is "very inclusive" and "quirky" is defined as "everyone is interesting in some way." There is a dedication to academics along with "leadership positions in one or two campus organizations." Such rankings reflect the amazing efforts and dedication of the Rice faculty and staff to provide the best possible educational experience.



That's what we do at Rice University — apply unconventional wisdom to solve today's problems and deliver tomorrow's solutions. Find out more at www.rice.edu/happystudents.



the anxiety and name it (i.e., that is just my “worry brain” talking).

As an extension of your counseling, consider helping students find books or mobile apps for coping with anxiety that address mindfulness, relaxation and sleep.


Next Steps

After receiving Tier 2 interventions for a period of time, a few students will still have such high levels of anxiety that it interferes with cognitive functioning and their ability to do what would be considered developmentally appropriate such as come to school on time. Consider addressing Tier 3 interventions with more intensive research-based groups such as Coping Cat or A Still Quiet Place. Additionally, a daily check in check out (CICO) program may help. CICO is an evidence-based intervention consisting of students checking in with an adult at the start of each school day to retrieve a goal sheet and encouragement. Teachers provide feedback on the sheet throughout

the day, and students check out at the end of the day with an adult. The student then takes the sheet home to be signed, returning it the following morning at check in. Although this has been shown to be effective with anxiety, it’s difficult for one school counselor to have more than a few students on CICO at a time. Consider using another trusted adult on staff to help implement this intervention. If after receiving Tier 1, 2 and 3 interventions for a reasonable time students are still struggling to cope, it is time to refer out for additional more intensive intervention. Research has shown that a combination of cognitive behavioral therapy and medication is an effective treatment for severe anxiety.

Some students receiving multitiered interventions in the general education setting also have a 504 plan because they have a diagnosed disability that significantly affects learning or another major life activity. School counselors commonly attend 504 meetings and suggest

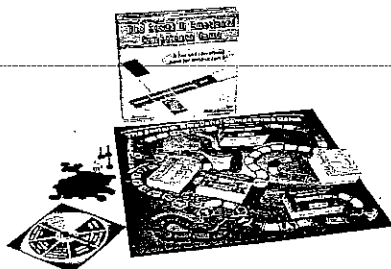
accommodations an individual student needs such as preferential seating, modified class participation and presentation options, small-group testing, alternative location for unstructured time, warning for fire drills or changes in routine like substitutes, use of a “fast break card” that students simply put on top of the desk when anxiety comes on suddenly and they need to leave the room to go for a break with a pre-arranged safe person in the school. Students can receive multitiered support with or without a 504 plan.

School counselors see students struggling with various levels and types of anxiety and stress daily. We need many tools in our toolbox so we can help the students to become stress smart and develop their own coping tools for anxiety that fits their unique needs. 

Mary Beth McCormac is a school counselor at Nottingham Elementary School in Falls Church, Va. She can be reached at mccormacmb@gmail.com.

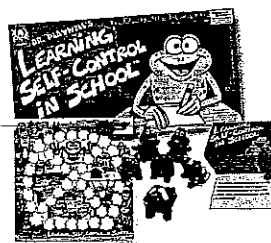


*Play More,
Smile More!
Your Recipe for Success*



Best Seller! The Social and Emotional Competence Game

A fun way to teach empathy, communication skills, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, self-management, and responsible decision-making.

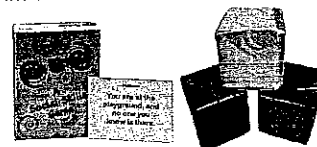


Dr. Playwell's Learning Self Control in School Board Game

Designed to help children who are having difficulty learning social rules, particularly children on the Autism Spectrum and children with Attention Deficit Disorders.

Dr. Playwell's Learning Social Rules in School Board Game

This game is designed to help students think about the consequences of their behavior and distinguish good choices from bad ones.



Roll A Role: A Social Skills Game Cubes & Cards Set

Social skills are an important part of a child's emotional intelligence. This game is designed to help children learn a variety of friend-making skills.



Enter coupon code ASCA and get 15% off everything on our site



Get the childtherapytoys app in your app store.

FREE SHIPPING ON ORDERS OVER \$99* FLAT RATE SHIPPING SPECIAL \$4.95*
(Continental U.S. ONLY)

ASCA

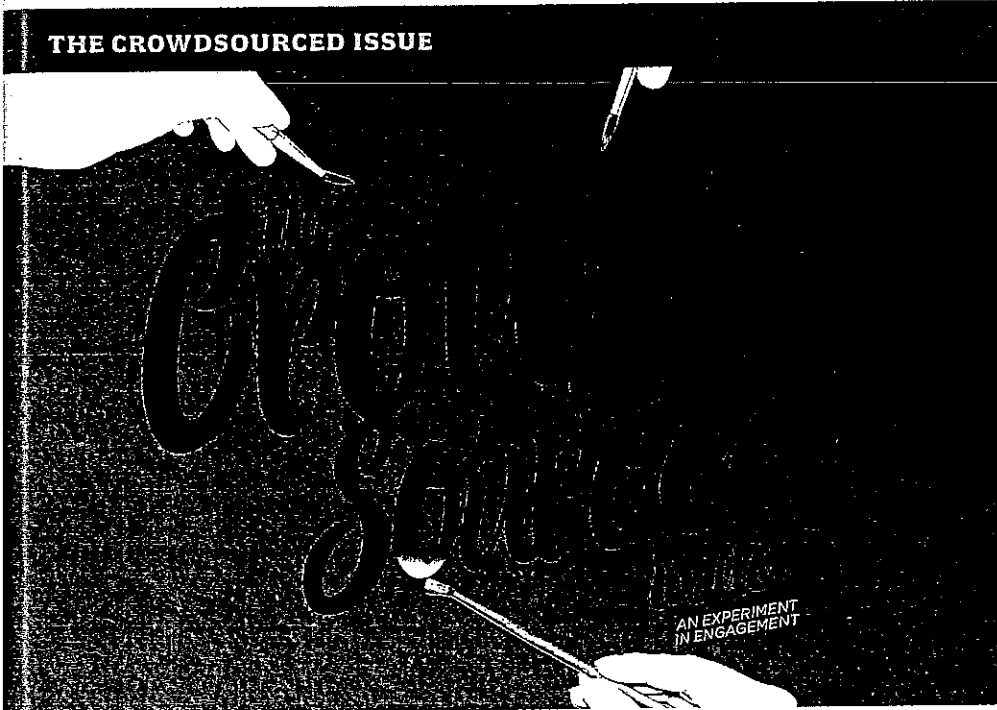
School | counselor

AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016

VOLUME 54 | NUMBER 1

THE CROWDSOURCED ISSUE



COLUMNS

- 4 Inside | Insight
- 6 Legal | Ethical

DEPARTMENTS

- 42 Board | Bulletin
- 43 New | Noteworthy
- 45 Calendar
- 45 Ad Index

12

ADDRESS STUDENT ANXIETY

Learn how to use evidence-based tools and data to help students with anxiety, regardless of their age.

By Mary E. McCormac

18

MOTIVATE STUDENTS

With motivational interviewing techniques and a small-group curriculum, you can improve unmotivated students' chance of success in school.

By Robert Pincus

26

MIND MATTERS

Mindfulness keeps gaining attention, including in a growing number of school counseling offices.

By Jim Paterson

32

ATTENDANCE WORKS

With data in hand and through community collaboration, the Geneva City School District addressed its attendance concerns head on.

By Hennessey Lustica, Susan McGowan and Aaron Backhaus

36

PLAN FOR SUCCESS

Building your school counseling program's annual calendar can be one of the most important tools for an organized, successful school year.

By Debra Brown and Crystal Brewer

40

LEARNING THE RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

What do you get when you combine four days of professional development, nearly 3,000 school counseling professionals and an exciting city? ASCA's biggest – and best – conference yet.



Learn how to use evidence-based tools and data to help students
with anxiety, regardless of their age.

BY MARY E. MCCORMAC

ADDRESS STUDENT ANXIETY

There is currently a stress and anxiety crisis in our schools. Anxiety, a sense of fear and worry, is the most common mental health challenge facing children, teens and adults. More than a quarter of teens report experiencing extreme stress during the school year. Some stress and anxiety is good, but extreme levels result in students feeling overwhelmed, having health problems related to the release of stress hormones in the body and sometimes even contemplating suicide. Stress is a trigger for anxiety and perfectionism. Without social/emotional education and early intervention, youth often develop unhealthy coping strategies and behaviors to deal with anxiety. These unhealthy behaviors often persist into adulthood.

challenges schoolwide through a mental health awareness day or mental wellness week. Look at the school year, and prepare for peak times of anxiety and stress. For example, the start of a school year or a long break from school can trigger specific behaviors, which can be reinforced by the responses and outcomes that follow the behavior. Pay special attention to students transitioning to a new school, which is a stressor. You may need to implement de-stressing tips and activities during the end of the quarter when many projects are due, tests are given and standardized tests are administered.

For elementary schools these activities could be done in the classroom, and at the secondary level school counselors can set up a play and wellness table in the cafeteria with de-stressing activities, such as coloring mandalas, making stress balls, blowing bubbles, writing positive affirmations on sticky notes and posting them on a bulletin board. Viewing anxiety behaviors as "learned" suggests the school counselor can modify the environmental conditions so problem behavior is less prevalent and occurs less frequently.

Schools are beginning to see the importance of having an evidence-based schoolwide social/emotional program in place. Learn more about these programs at www.casel.org/.

To help prevent anxiety from becoming a concern, teach all students positive self-talk to regulate attention, thoughts and emotions. The best way to teach these skills to all students is through an evidence-based program such as Second Step or MindUp. In these programs all students learn ways to develop emotion regulation through diaphragmatic breathing, accurately identifying feelings and problem-solving skills to handle challenge. By encouraging all students to focus on positive emotions like happiness and teaching them that kindness and compassion make both the giver and receiver more positive, you can help them cope with anxiety. The student, parents and teachers need to reinforce progress toward new, more appropriate skills so they will be repeated. Teachers should try some accommodations and record data on their effectiveness for at least four weeks before referring a student for a Tier 2 intervention.

#1 Happiest students

— Princeton Review

#1 Lots of race/class interaction

— Princeton Review

#4 Best colleges nationwide

— Money Magazine

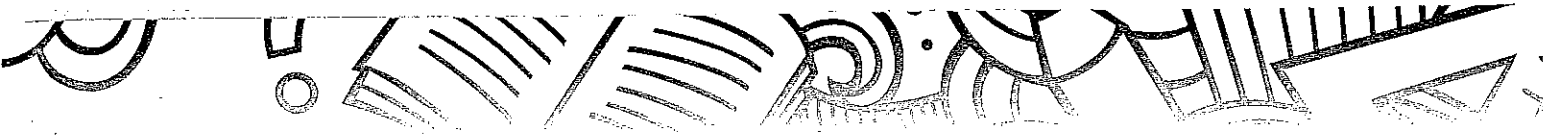


Unconventional? Not at Rice.

Pretty amazing numbers from some pretty prestigious organizations that study higher education. Specifically Princeton Review's The Best 381 Colleges and Money Magazine's 2016 national list of best colleges and universities. They included comments about the university being "academically rigorous but not particularly stressful," with an emphasis more on "collaboration than competition." Students say, Rice is "very inclusive" and "quirky" is defined as "everyone is interesting in some way." There is a dedication to academics along with "leadership positions in one or two campus organizations." Such rankings reflect the amazing efforts and dedication of the Rice faculty and staff to provide the best possible educational experience.



That's what we do at Rice University — apply unconventional wisdom to solve today's problems and deliver tomorrow's solutions. Find out more at www.rice.edu/happystudents.



the anxiety and name it (i.e., that is just my “worry brain” talking).

As an extension of your counseling, consider helping students find books or mobile apps for coping with anxiety that address mindfulness, relaxation and sleep.

Next Steps

After receiving Tier 2 interventions for a period of time, a few students will still have such high levels of anxiety that it interferes with cognitive functioning and their ability to do what would be considered developmentally appropriate such as come to school on time. Consider addressing Tier 3 interventions with more intensive research-based groups such as Coping Cat or A Still Quiet Place. Additionally, a daily check in check out (CICO) program may help. CICO is an evidence-based intervention consisting of students checking in with an adult at the start of each school day to retrieve a goal sheet and encouragement. Teachers provide feedback on the sheet throughout

the day, and students check out at the end of the day with an adult. The student then takes the sheet home to be signed, returning it the following morning at check in. Although this has been shown to be effective with anxiety, it’s difficult for one school counselor to have more than a few students on CICO at a time. Consider using another trusted adult on staff to help implement this intervention. If after receiving Tier 1, 2 and 3 interventions for a reasonable time students are still struggling to cope, it is time to refer out for additional more intensive intervention. Research has shown that a combination of cognitive behavioral therapy and medication is an effective treatment for severe anxiety.

Some students receiving multitiered interventions in the general education setting also have a 504 plan because they have a diagnosed disability that significantly affects learning or another major life activity. School counselors commonly attend 504 meetings and suggest

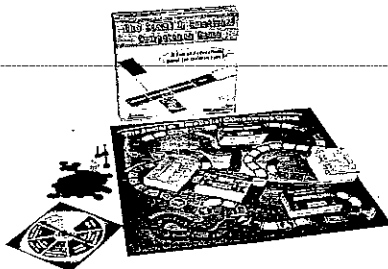
accommodations an individual student needs such as preferential seating, modified class participation and presentation options, small-group testing, alternative location for unstructured time, warning for fire drills or changes in routine like substitutes, use of a “fast break card” that students simply put on top of the desk when anxiety comes on suddenly and they need to leave the room to go for a break with a pre-arranged safe person in the school. Students can receive multitiered support with or without a 504 plan.

School counselors see students struggling with various levels and types of anxiety and stress daily. We need many tools in our toolbox so we can help the students to become stress smart and develop their own coping tools for anxiety that fits their unique needs. ☐

.....
Mary Beth McCormac is a school counselor at Nottingham Elementary School in Falls Church, Va. She can be reached at mccormacmb@gmail.com.



*Play More,
Smile More!
Your Recipe for Success*



Best Seller! The Social and Emotional Competence Game

A fun way to teach empathy, communication skills, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, self-management, and responsible decision-making.



Dr. Playwell's Learning Social Rules in School Board Game

This game is designed to help students think about the consequences of their behavior and distinguish good choices from bad ones.

Dr. Playwell's Learning Self Control in School Board Game

Designed to help children who are having difficulty learning social rules, particularly children on the Autism Spectrum and children with Attention Deficit Disorders.



Roll A Role: A Social Skills Game Cubes & Cards Set

Social skills are an important part of a child's emotional intelligence. This game is designed to help children learn a variety of friend-making skills.



Enter coupon code ASCA and get 15% off everything on our site



Get the childtherapytoys app in your app store.

FREE SHIPPING ON ORDERS OVER \$99 **FLAT RATE SHIPPING SPECIAL \$4.95***
(Continental U.S. ONLY)