

WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



— A Guide for School Counselors —

Theresa A. Quigney and Jeannine R. Studer

Working with Students with Disabilities

Like no other book available, *Working with Students with Disabilities: A Guide for School Counselors* provides comprehensive coverage of school counselors' roles in special education and working with students with disabilities, and connects that coverage to both the ASCA National Model and CACREP standards.

In *Working with Students with Disabilities*, school counselors will find thoughtful analyses of the legal and regulatory basis for many of the practices in special education, including an overview of pertinent laws including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. They'll gain an in-depth understanding of the leadership role that school counselors should play in supporting students, teachers, and families, and they'll also come away with an understanding of the common challenges—such as bullying, cyberbullying, and successful transitioning from high school to adult life—to which students with disabilities may be more vulnerable, as well as less common challenges such as behavioral difficulties, autism spectrum disorders, and many more.

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Preface

School counselors have an obligation to work with all students, including those with special needs. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) specifically recognizes the importance of professional school counselors' involvement in special education-related issues, as conveyed in their position statement, "professional school counselors are committed to helping all students realize their potential, and meet or exceed academic standards yearly progress regardless of challenges resulting from disabilities or other special needs" (ASCA, 2013, para. 1). Furthermore, this responsibility is recognized by agencies such as the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). This council highlights the importance of understanding and assessing barriers that impede the growth of school-aged youth, comprehending exceptional abilities and strategies for differentiated interventions, and recognizing the school counselor's role in the individualized education plan (IEP) process (CACREP, 2009).

Although school counselors do have formal preparation in such critical areas as counseling dynamics, interpersonal skills training, collaborative practice, advocacy, and consultation, many have not had adequate exposure or practice regarding the specific application of such areas to the needs of students with disabilities. Moreover, some school counselors had not had ample opportunity in their training to gain a strong knowledge base and practical experience with issues unique to students with special needs. For example, school counselors often have little training in the process involved with the identification of a disability, IEP development and implementation, formal transitional planning for post-secondary issues, and the legislative basis for many aspects of the field of special education.

There is obviously a strong disconnect between the mandate, recommendation, and expectation that school counselors will work effectively with students with special needs and their formal preparation to fulfill this responsibility. We have written this book to close the gap between training, expectations, and professional responsibilities.

This book is divided into three sections. Part I focuses on the legal and regulatory basis for many of the practices in special education, including an overview of many of the pertinent laws. Part I will not only provide critical information for a strong knowledge base in special education, but we make specific application to the roles of the school counselor related to the content.

While Part I will expose school counselors to a special education framework and enable them to ascertain how their roles correspond to this context, Part II focuses on

areas more traditionally associated with school counselor preparation, specifically with students with disabilities. The major theme of this section emphasizes the leadership role that school counselors should play in supporting students with disabilities, teachers and educational personnel who work with the students, families/parents of the students, and pertinent members of the community.

Part III of the book provides a discussion of current issues of particular importance to school counselors as they work with students with disabilities and their families. Special education is a field that is continually evolving, which makes it imperative that school counselors keep informed regarding pertinent issues. Some of the issues to be discussed are ones that other students without disabilities face, such as bullying, cyberbullying, and graduation from high school, but to which students with disabilities may be more vulnerable.

Through the discussion of themes, the overall objective is to provide comprehensive coverage of special education-related topics. This framework also promotes the specific objectives for school counselors to: (a) attain a working legislative knowledge of the field of special education and how their roles relate to this context; (b) understand how traditional areas associated with their formal preparation can and should be adapted to students with disabilities as well as in collaboration with educational personnel and families; (c) gain a working knowledge of issues specific to students with disabilities, such as the transition process and specific social and emotional concerns, as well as their roles in addressing such areas; and (d) become informed consumers of current information of particular importance in special education and how it affects their role. CACREP-related standards are also addressed in each chapter.

For School Counselors-in-Training

As you learn about the school counselor's role in a comprehensive, developmental school counseling (CDSC) program, you have an obligation to learn how the ASCA National Model is designed to promote the growth and achievement of pre-K-12 students, including those with disabilities. In this text you will read about the various disabilities commonly found among school-aged youth, the laws and procedures that protect and support these students, and how to apply developmental and learning theories as you work with students with disabilities. Furthermore, common individual and group counseling theories and techniques that are successful with students with disabilities, and specific strategies that assist in collaboration with stakeholders are additional topics discussed in this text.

For Professional School Counselors

This text provides you with current trends, laws, and strategies that are designed to facilitate your work with students with disabilities and their families. The information in the chapters is designed to supplement your work in the school with students enrolled in special programs. Counseling theories and techniques, collaborative approaches, and transition strategies that can be adapted for students with various disabilities are introduced, and information that will aid in your understanding of how the ASCA National Model can be used to reach students with different abilities and needs is provided.

For Counselor Educators

Students who are training for the school counseling profession often receive inconsistent knowledge regarding their work with students with disabilities. Although the ASCA and CACREP mandate that we work with all students in the educational environment, school counselors often feel ill-prepared to work effectively with students with disabilities and their families. The information in this text is designed to prepare school counseling students as they work with students with disabilities. Case studies, conceptual application activities designed for self-reflection and application, and student activities that can be adapted for school-aged youth are included for concept relevance.

References

- ASCA (2013). *The Professional School Counselor and Students with Disabilities*. Retrieved from www.schoolcounselor.org/files/PS_SpecialNeeds.pdf.
- CACREP (2009). www.cacrep.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/2009-Standards.pdf.

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Part I

Issues Related to Legislation and Regulations

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1 The Role of the School Counselor in Working with Students with Disabilities

The following CACREP standards are addressed in this chapter:

PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ORIENTATION AND ETHICAL PRACTICE

- a. history and philosophy of the counseling profession and its specialty areas

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- c. multicultural counseling competencies
- d. the impact of heritage, attitudes beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others
- h. strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination

ENTRY-LEVEL SPECIALTY AREAS: SCHOOL COUNSELING CONTEXTUAL DIMENSIONS

- g. characteristics, risk factors, and warning signs of students at risk for mental health and behavioral disorders

PRACTICE

- i. approaches to increase promotion and graduation rates

Chapter Objectives

After you have completed this chapter, you should be able to:

- Describe historical trends that have influenced the school counselor's role with students with disabilities.
- Recognize the ASCA National Model components and their relationship to students with disabilities.
- Self-reflect on attitudes toward students with disabilities.

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So there I was, sitting across from mom, who—within seconds—lurched across the room stating firmly, “and it’s all because of *you!*” I wasn’t quite sure how to respond. However, as I listened further, mom went on to explain that it was after my explanation of Joey’s EXPLORE [test to assist students plan their high school courses and choose a career path] scores and the discrepancy of not being within reasonable reach of his post-secondary goals that mom realized something had to be done. Sadly, it was the spring of his sophomore year when this pursuit of further testing began; however, mom had been persistent for years in making several requests for parent/teacher conferences due to her instinct that “something wasn’t quite right” with Joey, but because he was “managing his bipolar without significant negative educational impact,” he was never tested outside of his outside, independent evaluation. Joey was finally able to be identified as a student needing special assistance and an IEP was created.

As a school counselor, I find it difficult to walk the balance of protecting school protocols and advocating for students. As a parent of a child with special needs, I know that the families who are persistent are the ones who eventually get the system to “oil their squeaky wheels.” I feel my job is to extend the voice of the parent, bring it to notice of administration, and then leave it to the administration to determine the next step.

As it turned out, Joey’s mom was actually grateful for the EXPLORE results as it gave her the concrete evidence to refute the decisions school personnel had determined. Thus, the lunge across the room was really an expression of gratitude for simply doing my job as a professional school counselor.

Secondary-level school counselor

As indicated in the scenario above, the school counselor is instrumental in facilitating the academic, vocational, and social/emotional growth of all students, particularly those with disabilities. Legislative mandates such as Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) have provided the catalyst to encourage schools to pay greater attention to certain groups of students and to maximize educational achievement for *all* students (McDonnell, 2005). These legislative directives have changed the system’s approach to at-risk students—such as those with disabilities—and in response to these mandates, the training and education of school counselors has also changed. Although school counselors have a responsibility to work with all students in pre-K-12 educational settings, unfortunately students with disabilities have not always received the school counseling benefits that their non-disabled peers have enjoyed (Bergin & Bergin, 2004; Milsom, 2002, 2006).

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) sets the guidelines for the practice and role of school counselors in all school settings. As stated in the ASCA position statement on students with disabilities, school counselors “advocate for students with special needs, encourage family involvement in their child’s education and collaborate with other educational professionals to promote academic achievement for all” (ASCA, 2013, para. 6).

Despite this directive, there is a wide variation in the types of assistance school counselors provide to students with disabilities. Milsom (2002) investigated the

critical role that school counselors play in regard to students with disabilities to determine: (a) school counselor activities in relation to students with disabilities; (b) school counselor preparation to engage in these activities; and (c) the amount of education school counselors receive to effectively work with these youth. The results of this study indicated that school counselor participants at all levels felt “somewhat prepared” to work with students with disabilities, but less prepared for transition planning. In another study (Milsom & Akos, 2003), school counselors indicated that they felt inadequately trained for working with students with disabilities, and that school counselor preparation programs varied in the training provided to pre-service school counselors regarding special education issues, which suggests inconsistent skills and knowledge among school counselors.

With the critical obligation to work with students with disabilities, it is perplexing as to the reason why more school counselors are not adequately prepared for this challenge. The history of the school counseling profession, special education legislation, and professional attitudes toward students with differences provide partial answers to this dilemma.

History of School Counseling and Students with Disabilities

The Industrial Revolution is credited as ushering in “guidance counselors,” and what today are known as *professional school counselors*. At the turn of the 20th century, the United States shifted from a rural to an urban society, and—with mandatory education laws—youth from all socioeconomic groups entered schools in unprecedented numbers. Teachers were unprepared for the diverse youth in need of guidance to prepare for careers that were unprecedented before this time. To address this problem, teachers assumed the role of “guidance worker” in which there was no relief from regular teaching duties, no training, and no additional pay (Gysbers, 2001). There was also a need to provide assistance to alleviate the social and emotional concerns that youth brought into the educational setting; an objective that was added to the already demanding workload.

For numerous years, school personnel ignored the needs of students with disabilities due to the belief that they were inferior, and not educable (DeLambo et al., 2007). As a result, these youth were confined to education at home, placed in expensive private schools, or enrolled in institutions with classes segregated from the general education classes. With legislation, the testing movement, the development of psychological theories, and the mental hygiene movements, views regarding students with disabilities changed. In the decade of the 1930s, 16 states in America created laws that authorized special education instruction, and in the following decade, additional laws were created that stipulated an additional focus on the education of students with disabilities. In the 1960s, funding was provided for training personnel in relation to students with disabilities, but it wasn’t until 1975, when the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94–142) became law, that free and appropriate public education (FAPE) was legislated for all children with disabilities. In the 1990s, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed to prevent discrimination against individuals with disabilities (Marshak et al., 2010), and in 2002, NCLB mandated that students with disabilities were to be included in annual assessments to demonstrate adequate yearly progress (AYP). School counselors were expected to assist with the increasing numbers of students with

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disabilities who were entering general education classrooms (Greer & Greer, 1995). Unfortunately, despite legal mandates and the passage of many years since this original legislation, few school counselor training programs offer courses in issues surrounding students with disabilities.

To rectify this curricular training omission, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) identified standards to address all student needs, including those with disabilities. Likewise, the ASCA School Counselor Competencies acknowledged the knowledge, skills, and attitudes school counselors needed to work effectively in a comprehensive, developmental school counseling (CDSC) program. Yet, despite these directives, effective working relationships require attention to personal attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, particularly in regard to those who may be perceived as different.

Attitudes Influencing Students with Disabilities

Unfortunately, negative attitudes toward individuals with disabilities have been pervasive throughout the ages (DeLambo et al., 2007), which impair productive working relationships.

Conceptual Application Activity 1.1

Interview a school counselor in a school setting of your choice. What training has this school counselor received in working with students with disabilities? What are the most frequent tasks in which he/she engages with this population of students? Compare your answers with those of your peers.

When there is a lack of adequate training and preparation for assistive services, negative attitudes are often an outcome (Praisner, 2003), which may contribute to lowered academic expectations for students with disabilities (Bowen & Glenn, 1998, as cited in Milsom, 2006). There is also the continual assumption that the teacher of special education would take care of all the needs of students with disabilities (Bergin & Bergin, 2004); a belief that has contributed to educators' reservations to reach out to these students. Furthermore, school counselors who adhere to these negative attitudes may dissuade students from taking rigorous courses or discourage them from attending post-secondary education.

The perception of the cause of the disability often contributes to negative attitudes and social distancing (DeLambo et al., 2007). Although these attitudes are difficult to change, education makes a difference in changing stigmas associated with persons with disabilities. School counselors are instrumental personnel in promoting positive school experiences and modifying attitudes through educational programming. For instance, bringing in speakers from the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) to discuss causes of mental illness and methods for assisting those with mental illness could provide helpful knowledge and lead to a change in beliefs. Or, exposing students to media presentations that negatively represent those with disabilities could provide them with opportunities to reflect on and analyze these portrayals to discredit these depictions (DeLambo et al., 2007).

Obviously, self-reflection and training under supervision to attain the necessary skills and knowledge to successfully assist students is essential. Conceptual Application Activities 1.2 and 1.3 are designed to begin evaluating personal beliefs, knowledge, and skills to effectually assist students with disabilities.

Conceptual Application Activity 1.2

Self-Assessment for Students with Disabilities

I. Self-Awareness of values and biases

A. Attitudes and Beliefs

I believe that...

1. awareness of personal beliefs regarding individuals with disabilities is vital.
2. my own background and experiences play a role in my attitudes, values, and biases.
3. I am able to recognize the limits of my competence and knowledge in working with students with disabilities.
4. I am able to recognize sources of discomfort that exist between students with disabilities and myself.

B. Knowledge

I am knowledgeable of...

1. my own background and how it personally and professionally influences my view of students with differences.
2. my impact on others including my communication style, and counseling techniques and theory.
3. the influences of parental beliefs and parenting styles on the educational goals of students with special needs.
4. legal mandates that influence academic, vocational, and personal/social growth (e.g., transition, IEP, 504 Plans).

C. Skills

I am able to...

1. seek out educational experiences to improve my understanding and effectiveness in working with students with disabilities.
2. seek out opportunities to better understand myself (e.g., personal counseling).

II. Counselor Awareness of Student's Worldview

A. Attitudes and Beliefs

I believe that...

1. I am aware of my negative and positive emotions toward students with disabilities that may prove detrimental to the counseling relationship.
2. I am aware of my biases and preconceived notions that I may hold toward students with special needs.

B. Knowledge

I am knowledgeable of...

1. specific information about the particular group with whom I am working. I am aware of how the life experiences, biological, sociological, psychological, educational factors of students with disabilities.
2. how disabilities may influence personality formation, vocational choices, help seeking behaviors, and the appropriateness or inappropriateness of counseling approaches.
3. how disabilities are associated with at-risk behaviors.

C. Skills

I am able to...

1. familiarize myself with current research regarding disorders that affect students with disabilities. I actively seek out educational experiences to enrich my knowledge, understanding, and cross-cultural skills for more effective counseling strategies.
2. become actively involved with individuals outside of the counseling setting to acquire available resources to assist students with disabilities.

III. Counseling Intervention Strategies

A. Beliefs and Attitudes

I believe that...

1. all students, regardless of abilities, have a right to achieve.
2. I believe that not all students are able to benefit from "talk therapy" and that alternative counseling strategies may be better able to reach students.

B. Knowledge

I am knowledgeable of...

1. institutional barriers that prevent students with disabilities from achieving.
2. the potential bias in assessment instruments and use procedures that are appropriate to the needs of the student.
3. family issues that could influence youth welfare.
4. discriminatory attitudes held by general education teachers that could impair student growth.

C. Skills

I am able to...

1. engage in a variety of verbal and non-verbal helping responses that are appropriate to each individual student, regardless of special needs. When I sense my helping style is unsuitable for the student, I am able to modify it.
2. advocate on behalf of students, or teach advocacy skills to students to promote themselves.

3. seek consultation when appropriate.
4. seek supervision when necessary.
5. receive training in my role as a school counselor for all students.
6. take responsibility for educating students, teachers, and parents about the special needs of students with disabilities.

Conceptual Application Activity 1.3

After you have completed Conceptual Application Activity 1.2, self-reflect on how these characteristics will assist you in effectively working with students with special needs and their parents/guardians. What areas do you wish to improve? Next, identify the areas that you would like to improve and strategies for acquiring these attributes and complete the chart below.

<i>Competency to attain</i>	<i>Strategies for acquiring this competency</i>	<i>Benchmark for reaching goal</i>	<i>Evaluation to assess competency</i>

Studies reveal that when counselors have an opportunity to evaluate their own counseling performances, an increased confidence in counseling abilities occurs (Little et al., 2005). Assessment of beliefs in regard to students with special needs is a primary step for effectively working with this population, but it is not enough; self-reflecting on how beliefs are congruent with the goals of the ASCA National Model is an additional step.

The ASCA National Model and Students with Disabilities

As mentioned previously, when “guidance workers” initiated vocational guidance for students in schools, there was primarily no training for the additional duties that teachers assumed. Furthermore, variations in school counselor roles from school to school, district to district, and state to state resulted due to a lack of a structured organization to standardize the role of these professionals. In the 1930s and 1940s, a service-oriented pupil personnel model was proposed to organize the educational professionals who did not fit into any other structure, with the intention of maximizing resources without service duplication (Gysbers, 2001). This configuration included such individuals as attendance officers, school nurses, visiting teachers, school psychologists, and “guidance workers.” This reactionary model, also known as “student services,” continued to be the organizational structure that focused on responsibilities of the “guidance counselor” rather than the needs of students. Despite this structure, confusion regarding the tasks and responsibilities of school counselors continued.



Figure 1.1 High school students exploring vocational post-secondary options.

Source: ©iStockphoto.com, www.istockphoto.com/photo/diverse-young-adults-8359714.

A competency-based guidance program was proposed and developed by Gysbers and Moore (Gysbers, 2001) as an alternative guidance structure during the 1970s and 1980s. Despite proven student benefits of this model in enhancing academic achievement, career development, and social/emotional growth (Lee et al., 2008) “guidance counselors” continued to work in a traditional program that varied depending on the school culture.

With legislation that mandated accountability efforts to demonstrate program effectiveness, and requirements designed to address the opportunity gap among marginalized students, the American School Counselor Association developed the ASCA National Standards for School Counseling Programs in 1997 (later renamed the ASCA National Standards for Students) (ACSA, 2012). Nine standards are identified in academic, career, and personal/social (now retitled social/emotional) domains, with identified competencies and indicators to determine and assess student acquisition of knowledge, behavior, and attitudes as a result of participating in a school counseling program. In 2014, the ASCA once again revised these standards to align with the Common Core State Standards in a document entitled *Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success* (ASCA, 2014).

Although the original standards provided direction for school counseling programs, more focus and structure was needed, and six years later the ASCA National Model was created as a framework for building CDSC programs that are connected to the school mission and integral to the total educational program (ASCA, 2005). The National Model provides a map for school counselors to transform their school counseling program from one that is ancillary and service-oriented to one that addresses social justice and educational gaps for marginalized students, such as those with disabilities (Lee & Goodnough, 2007; Ratts et al., 2007). In 2012, the ASCA National Model was revised to



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Figure 1.2 The ASCA National Model.

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clarify language, to promote opportunities for all students, and to ease implementation (ASCA, 2012). Figure 1.2 is an illustration of the ASCA National Model.

The ASCA Model Components and Themes

The ASCA National Model incorporates the four components of foundation, management, delivery, and accountability, with themes of leadership, systemic change, collaboration, and advocacy interwoven throughout the components (ASCA, 2012).

The Foundation Component

Program focus, student competencies, and professional competencies are three subsections within the foundation component. The *program focus* ensures that the school counseling program is built upon a well-defined and understood set of beliefs that are aligned with the school's mission, and guided by well-defined program goals. School

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counselors have a responsibility to use inclusive language that emphasizes the school counseling program commitment to social justice when writing mission, vision, and belief statements.

Beliefs are formulated around personal experiences and backgrounds (ASCA, 2012) with attention to self-perceptions, views of others, and school counselor programming. Integral to educational beliefs is the view that *all* students are valued, and that opportunities provided to students in the general education curriculum are also provided to students with disabilities. The school counselor vision statement is shaped by how the school counseling program is envisioned for the future, whereas the mission statement provides structure for reaching the vision, and program goals are created after the school counselor examines data to address any groups of students whose needs are not being addressed (ASCA, 2012).

The ASCA Student Standards (formerly the ASCA National Standards), renamed ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success, and other educational standards such as those identified by individual states, identify the knowledge, skills, and attitudes students should be able to display due to their participation in a school counseling program. Attention is given to ensuring that students with disabilities have the same opportunities to acquire the standards selected for the general student body.

Finally, the ASCA School Counselor Competencies serve as a self-assessment or as a guide for administrators to understand the essential role of the school counselor, and can be accessed at www.schoolcounselor.org/files/SCCompetencies.pdf.

With social justice as a critical concept within the counseling profession and a foundation for developing and implementing strategies that support egalitarian practice (Locke & Bailey, 2014), the ASCA Ethical Standards provide guidance in making decisions for all stakeholders (ASCA, 2010).

Conceptual Application Activity 1.4

Select a school and look at the school counseling vision and mission statements. Do these assertions have references to diversity and students with disabilities? Rewrite the statements with attention to these issues.

The Management Component

The management component includes assessments and tools. *Assessments* include the school counselor competencies, school counseling program assessment, and use of time assessment. Attention is given to ensure that the school counselor has the indispensable competencies to understand students and their families with disabilities, and the necessary skills and attitudes to work effectively with these individuals.

Conceptual Application Activity 1.5

Interview a school counselor and talk with this individual about the time he/she spends performing direct services to students enrolled in the general curriculum. How does this time compare with the time spent with students with disabilities?

Tools include such areas as annual agreement, advisory council, data, curriculum, lesson plans, and calendars that provide structure to the program and attention to students with disabilities. With the post-secondary focus that was traditionally the purview of our school counselor predecessors, stakeholders often have difficulty understanding the multiple responsibilities that school counselors assume, with little comprehension of how the school counselor assists students with disabilities. Therefore, the school counselor has a responsibility to teach these stakeholders and others about the ASCA National Model, how school counselors serve as leaders of this program, and the needs of *all* students within the educational setting.

Conceptual Application Activity 1.6

Take a look at the school counselor's calendar of events and discuss the various activities that address students with disabilities.

The Delivery Component

The delivery component includes *direct* and *indirect* services. Direct activities include the school counseling core curriculum, individual student planning, and responsive services. Indirect activities comprise referrals, consultation, and collaboration.

The *school counseling core curriculum* is delivered either through classroom instruction or group activities, and conveyed to every student when appropriate. According to the ASCA position statement *The Professional School Counselor and Students with Disabilities*, school counselors have a responsibility to provide curriculum lessons "to students with special needs within the scope of the comprehensive school counseling program" (ASCA, 2013, para. 4). As a result, school counselors are able to work collaboratively with the special educator by team-teaching on topics such as assertiveness, bullying, or social skill development.

Individual student planning assists with individual goal-setting and is implemented through appraisal and advisement strategies. Students with disabilities are not to be overlooked, and their personal and career goals and strategies for reaching these desires are to be addressed. The ASCA, in its position statement, maintains that school counselors provide "assistance with academic and transition plans for students in the IEP when appropriate" (ASCA, 2013, para. 4). *Responsive services* in the form of individual and group counseling and crisis response facilitate problem resolution. Counselors are able to use such concrete strategies such as social stories, comic strip conversations, mirror or imitative exercises, and videotaping (Marshak et al., 2010) to reach students who rely on concrete strategies in individual or group counseling. Counselors are reminded that the provision of long-term therapy is an inappropriate activity in the school setting (ASCA, 2013, para. 5).

Case Study 1.1

I have found that teachers are perplexed by students diagnosed with ADD or ADHD, and I have been delighted to work with some amazing teachers who go out of their way to accommodate the needs of these students. One of the eighth-grade students