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ABSTRACT

Initially, the author states his personal philosophy of guidance. He then describes the potential resistances, to an elementary guidance program, by administrators, teachers and parents. These, he feels, can be overcome through a public relations approach which facilitates communication, develops understanding and promotes involvement. Possible concrete steps are enumerated. A breakdown of the author's work week shows that his time is distributed among teaching guidance classes, counseling, group work, and teacher collaboration. Several of his instructional methods are briefly discussed. It is the author's feeling that counseling is the most crucial function. Thirteen case studies are included which provide a range of situations likely to be encountered in elementary guidance. Evaluations of the pilot program by the principal, teachers and students are summarized and obviously weigh heavily on the author's concluding suggestions for possible changes, priorities and improvements. (TL)

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THE CHILD , THE SCHOOL ,
THE GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR
IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL
(GRADES 6,7, and 8)

submitted by

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My Personal Philosophy of Guidance

In order to arrive at my personal philosophy of guidance I feel it is first necessary to enquire into the nature of the person who will become involved in guidance. In my opinion not everyone is suited for guidance, simply by their nature. If one is to be successful, I feel the person must first and foremost be dedicated completely to the idea that his purpose is to serve the children that come under his influence. He must be prepared to give unstintingly of time and talent, with little or no thought or regard for materialistic gain in wealth or in his position. These, I feel, will follow naturally.

Guidance, to me personally, is a calling, a call equally strong to that felt by a minister, for example. This call would, ideally, be received by a teacher who has five or more years of successful experience, successful not only in the eyes of the administrators under whom he works but in the eyes of the pupils he has taught as well. This teacher would know, love and understand children in all their ages, moods and various behavior patterns. This person would be willing to continue endlessly to learn more and more about children through personal experience, observation, or study. This is where dedication becomes most important, for in my opinion, a person who takes a guidance course simply to move into another salary category or some other equally invalid reason should not be in the guidance program. This may sound like a vain, harsh statement but I say it for two reasons. One is the thought of an educator I admire greatly who once said, "What more valuable raw material can a teacher be given to work with than the mind of a child?" The second is this - I would ask those who question to

keep in mind that guidance personnel deal daily with people's lives and these should not be tampered with by someone who does not care, and I mean really care.

What is guidance? I feel that guidance is an attempt, hopefully successful, to assist the child to evaluate the situation in which he finds himself. Regardless of the child's age, hopefully he will be successful in discerning a way in which he may meet life, AS THE CHILD SEES IT. Guidance and guidance personnel should be able to assist in any situation whether it be academic, social, emotional or whatever. The guidance person then, perhaps simply by listening, perhaps by a question or a suggestion, aids the child in finding a solution to the particular problem or concern, whether great or small, that concerns him at that time.

Guidance is a feeling of empathy between the child and his counsellor, a state of rapport such that when the child leaves, he leaves with the feeling - here is someone who really listens to me, who really cares, who is really trying to understand my problem as I see it and is trying to help me to do the same. In other words the child must see the counsellor as one who is sincerely wishing to help.

Guidance is a study of human behavior. It involves those factors which motivate certain kinds of behavior, the behavior itself, an understanding of the results both good and bad of this particular behavior. It also involves a study of the methods that may be used to help the child understand why he acts the way he does, and if necessary assist to correct the behavior to his advantage. This again involves dedication for many hours of study

and/or working with the child may be necessary to accomplish this goal.

Many more points of value could be added to give a philosophy of guidance but these are the ones that concern me most. In conclusion may I add that one more point should be added to my philosophy of guidance, in the form of clarification. Guidance to me, and this of course is a personal feeling, is a way of thinking, indeed a way of life. To some this may sound idealistic and old fashioned, perhaps outdated in this modern world. I, however, could not approach guidance on any other basis for the materials with which I work, the minds, the emotions, the lives of the people with whom I come in contact are too valuable to be considered in any other way.

A Review of My Actual Situation As It Exists in Norseman Middle School.....My Approach to The Situation.....My Goals.

The guidance program in Norseman Middle School was a venture into a completely new area. Because of this fact I felt that it could present many problems that would be mine to overcome. In an attempt to assess the situation I considered that the following could be areas of concern.

1. While to a certain extent lip service is being paid to the idea that guidance is a vital part of elementary school life, some administrators and school personnel are reluctant for one reason or another to let it become an integral part of the total school program.

2. The placing of guidance personnel in a school creates an additional cost, this of course is an additional burden to the taxpayer, and the sometimes unapparent results of the guidance program do not lend themselves to selling the public.

3. Many teachers, probably because of a fear of those who come to inspect, tend to be apprehensive and in some cases do not trust guidance personnel, feeling that this is just one more person who will report them to some superior.

4. For some time the idea has been held by many people in education that the teacher, because of his closeness to and his understanding of the pupils in his class, is in the best position to handle the guidance in an incidental way.

While these are by no means all the problems, they seemed to me to be the most urgent and therefore the ones I should deal with first before an effective guidance program could be implemented in the school.

In my efforts to cope with these problems I felt that three areas should be stressed, in a most diplomatic way, when I came in contact with administrators, staff or parents. These three were 1. communication 2. understanding 3. involvement. It is my considered opinion that most of the difficulty in establishing a guidance program in an elementary school would arise from the fact that most of the staff are in complete ignorance or have very vague, often incorrect ideas of the program in guidance, its purpose, its methods and its position in the overall program of the school. Let me emphasize here that it is not my purpose or my right to lay the blame for this situation on anyone, suffice it to say that in some areas these conditions exist. My job then in setting up the guidance program was to communicate with all concerned in the educational welfare of the child. This aspect leads naturally to understanding, for in my communication I attempted to give all concerned, insight and understanding of the role and objectives of the guidance department and its personnel. This seemed to me to be the ideal time to establish rapport with all who are interested as I am in the total development and educational growth of the child. Here too, many of the fears, concerns and misunderstandings can be brought out into the open and removed because with understanding fear disappears. In establishing this rapport and understanding I attempted to bring the third need to the fore and deal with it in turn. This need was involvement, which to me at this point seemed to be basically public relations. Teachers or any other educational personnel who can not communicate with or understand guidance personnel or their job are naturally going to feel left out and will probably resent this person. If, on the other hand, they become involved in working with the

guidance staff, they will probably be willing and anxious to make a contribution. This, I feel, is equally true of teacher, parent or administrator. Involving these people means that part of the end result is because of their contribution, so guidance increases in importance in their eyes. In effect then, the idea I wish to convey here is that I felt (and feel more strongly now) that all persons concerned with the education of the child must be part of a team, a team which recognizes the worth of each individual member and accepts and if suitable acts on their ideas. Thus through teamwork, the guidance department becomes an active, helping, integral, unthreatening part of the educational environment in which the child finds himself. It is my opinion that without this atmosphere the guidance services cannot function effectively, thus it is most urgent that good relations be established as soon as possible.

The question then arisehow? There are probably as many methods as there are counsellors but may I suggest a few. I feel the starting point is the principal's office. The counsellor must realize that the principal is responsible for the school program. This implies that he will want first of all an understanding of the objectives, program and methods the counsellor intends to use. No program should be entered upon without his complete understanding of what it will involve in content, time and goals. His approval is a prerequisite to its use. The counsellor may find it necessary to make haste slowly to ensure the complete understanding of the staff and more importantly, the principal. Perhaps a starting point would be to find some area of common interest with the principal, testing for instance, and volunteer help in evaluating

test results or whatever might be useful. It is equally important that a thorough job be done, and meticulously done, for if errors creep into the results and corrections or other extra work has to be done because of the counsellor, the counsellor does himself and guidance more harm than good, and rightly so. The method, then, show yourself willing to work, do a good job and make yourself an asset to the staff and principal. The counsellor must always bear in mind that he can only work, or offer to work, as opportunity presents itself. He cannot dictate, even though the matter in question seems very urgent, for the final authority rests in the hands of the principal. However, in most cases as the counsellor proves his worth he will be more and more accepted as a member of the educational team and given more freedom and responsibility. Unfortunately, I believe some principals feel that a guidance counsellor is a threat to their authority and the sooner this falsehood is dispelled, the better. In my particular case in Norseman, I feel that I have been most fortunate in being able to work very closely with my principal, and while some results have not been all that we might have desired, together we have evaluated and made changes that hopefully next year will improve the guidance services.

Many teachers also see the counsellor either as a threat or someone who sits in an easy chair all day and talks, doing no real work. Quite naturally, if they hold this viewpoint they resent and question the value of having a counsellor in the school. Here again then the first job of the counsellor is public relations. How may good public relations be established? I would suggest the

following ways as methods, though there are others. I feel that it is very important that the teacher see the counsellor as another member of the staff whose primary objective is exactly the same as theirs. This means then that the counsellor should get to know the staff on a personal basis as soon as possible and acquaint them with the above fact. This cannot be done in a formal manner for the tendency might be for the teacher to listen politely and then promptly forget the conversation. It is better I feel to convey this information gradually in a rather informal atmosphere such as a casual meeting in the hall, a staff room chat or perhaps a visit to the classroom if it is felt the teacher will accept this. At such times assistance can be offered in a diplomatic way which will pose no threat to the teacher if they are inclined to be unsure in their thinking about the counsellor. As with the principal assistance must be offered, not thrust upon the teacher. At some time during these conversation the counsellor should make the teacher aware that he respects the teacher as a fellow educator, as a person of intelligence and as one who has a worthwhile contribution to make because of his closeness to the child and his understanding of the child in the classroom situation. In other words the teacher must be made to feel that he is an important, integral part of a team whose task is the optimum educational development of the child. Once the teacher understands that he is needed and his opinions are respected, he will likely place his influence on the side of the counsellor. The teacher should also be made aware that results in guidance are not magically instantaneous. By working with the counsellor in planning, study of the child, assisting as much as possible to solve the problem, the impatience factor is reduced to a minimum.

Why is all the above necessary to have a successful guidance program? In my opinion it is simply because these are the basic, simple human relations factors that for much too long a period have been neglected. Let's be realistic. Teachers are human and it is natural for them to question the motives of someone who appears, clutching his guidance certificate in his hot little hand and proceeds to reform the school, the staff and the program. Communication, understanding and involvement must be established between counsellor and teacher if a guidance program is to operate to advantage in a school. This is the approach I used and as I stated earlier, while there have been some flaws, by and large the program at least began to become established and to assist the school. A third area in which I attempted to work because I felt it is so often neglected, possibly because of lack of time or lack of interest, is with the parent. Again let us be realistic. The parent from many aspects is the person who makes the existence of the guidance counsellor possible and necessary. The counsellor should remember that in many instances the parent is afraid, afraid of an unknown factor that has entered the life of their child -- guidance. Several approaches to the parent could be taken. I felt it was the responsibility of the counsellor to make contact with the parent at the earliest convenient time. Much the same type of information would be given to the parent as to the teacher and the same basic respect for the parent as an individual would be shown. The method of contact would vary. In my particular case I contacted the parent by phone and if the situation warranted suggested a personal interview at the parent's convenience in my office. Other means of course could be used. These might be a visit to the school, even to the extent of asking the parent to sit in on several classes on an ordinary day when

they might see their child in a normal classroom situation with his peers. This does take courage but the resultant communication and understanding on the part of the parent is well worth the strain involved. A Home and School meeting or some other similar occasion can also be used. Obviously there are certain aspects of guidance that are confidential, but once communication is established these can be explained. Any competent guidance counsellor will realize that the parent has much to offer in helping him to understand the child and so will obtain this knowledge and use it.

The first task then as I saw it was as outlined above, to begin communication with those involved in any way, to help understanding of the role and aims of the counsellor and finally to involve as many people as possible in some aspect of assistance so that they feel part of the team.

Distribution of Time, Techniques Used, Counselling, Group Work,
Working with Teachers.

As the program was set up this year in Norseman Middle School I had seventeen scheduled classes, five grade six, and six each of seven and eight. The remaining time was left free for counselling and of this time I was to take five professional development periods. At my request these periods were deleted as I felt I would prefer to be relatively free for counselling as needed. In addition two periods a week were tentatively set aside for conferences with the principal as need arose. The course of study followed was that outlined by the Department of Education. One exception was grade six, where to the best of my knowledge no course exists. To deal with this problem I used a course that had been prepared under the direction of the Department by one of our coordinators. Basically the grade six course dealt with units on study skills, getting along with friends and peers, getting along in school etc. While these courses served the purpose I felt that there were flaws which I shall deal with at a later point in this field study. In an effort to keep the pupils in the classes motivated, I tried several approaches. One naturally was the formal lesson which was useful for some topics such as those on emotions in grade seven. I supplemented these lessons with a considerable amount of audio-visual material such as movies, film strips (combined with records if possible), tapes of broadcasts, and so on. Three methods I used experimentally that seemed to work reasonably well were discussion or buzz groups. In these a topic was presented, broken down into areas of interest for discussion by small groups of pupils, then each group reported back to the whole class for further discussion and evaluation.

A second method that was experimental for me at least was role playing. Real life situations were presented to a small group of pupils, then they had to act out how they would handle this kind of situation. An example might be - you have been called to the principal's office. When you arrive he says that a pupil has said that you hit him in the yard. What would you do? The number of situations that can be presented to the pupils is almost limitless and they enjoy the break in routine. Many comments come from the evaluation after the role playing is completed. A final method is that of letting the pupils themselves assume the role of the teacher. This requires preparation so that the pupils must be told in advance, preferably two weeks at least. In most cases a group of three or four students would research the topic and when presenting it one or two would be the teacher. Several aspects of this method surprised me. The pupils are strict disciplinarians and if any child is out of order the remainder of the class rally to help the "teacher". Given a responsibility such as this the student will do a great amount of research, and rarely brings in material that is not authentic since they do not wish to be tripped up by the class. Grade sixes are uninhibited enough that they thoroughly enjoy this type of lesson and do an excellent job.

Counselling took a great amount of my time, in fact there was just no end to it. Referrals were made in three ways, by the teacher, by the principal, by self referral. On occasion I would request to see a child but I found anyone that came to my attention usually was referred in some other way. Unfortunately for a good part of the year many of the counselling sessions were of necessity crisis oriented. I say unfortunately because I feel that once a

guidance service is properly established it must be a preventative service, not a crisis oriented service. In a school of approximately five hundred and fifty pupils I had forty seven teacher referrals, over six hundred self referrals and discussed probably one hundred pupils with the principal. Some of the pupils were in to see me four or five times during the year. These requests have dealt with many topics, among them low achievement, discipline problems such as aggressiveness, study habits, personal problems both at home and in the school, testing, choice of options and similar concerns. Some of these counselling sessions will be discussed in more detail later in this paper.

A new field to me, and one that I feel will need to be explored further and used to a much greater extent next year was counselling in small groups. This has several advantages as I see it, primarily the fact that the counsellor can deal with several pupils at one time, thus saving time and seeing more students, the students tend to relax and reveal their problems in a smaller group, the students tend to accept evaluation and criticism from the peer group that it would be difficult for a counsellor to express and have accepted. In the evaluation of the program, some of the students expressed their feelings about group work. This will be discussed later. In the small groups the counsellor stays as much as possible in the background, acting only as a resource person. However, he may be asked by the group to become part of the group. However, if such is the case he must not enforce his will or ideas on the group. The students are permitted to talk about any subject they wish, including much to their surprise, teachers, school program, parents etc. It is most important that at this point the counsellor permit them to express their feelings

openly, without criticism in any form from the counsellor. In other words he must be completely accepting. As a trust is built up gradually between counsellor and the group (and they will deliberately test and bait the counsellor to see if he really means they can talk about anything and will respect the confidentiality of the group) gradually the topics will change and they will begin to evaluate, suggest solutions and change their thinking and behaviour. In most cases I found that the solution offered by the pupils was very similar to one I might have suggested and it was more readily accepted because it was their suggestion.

One last comment on small groups. I learned the hard way that it is not wise to let just any group of pupils get together for group discussions, for personality clashes can develop. I would suggest that every group should consist of no more than seven pupils. These should be carefully chosen so that at least one, preferably two pupils, will act as control for the group. If for example a group consists of seven selfish, egotistical, strong willed individuals then it will likely result in disaster. In my work this year I had only boys in the groups but it is my hope to have groups of all girls and mixed groups as well as all boys next year.

Referrals from teachers made up a portion of my counselling duties. These were a bit slow in coming at first but as the year progressed the tempo picked up. Referrals were made for many reasons, but for the most part mainly because of a concern about the academic progress of the pupil or because of a discipline problem. These two at first particularly seemed to be the major concerns of the teachers, hopefully this will change as time passes. In an effort to assist the teachers as much as possible several

courses of action were followed. Whenever pupils discussed a problem with me I attempted to convey as much information to the teacher as I could without betraying the confidence of the pupil. If it was important that the teacher know specific details, I asked for and usually got, permission from the pupil to discuss the matter with the teacher. Conveying information, without betraying confidence, is important I feel for as one teacher indicated, "Suppose a child tells of a serious problem at home, if the teacher simply knows there is a problem without knowing the confidential details it will help the teacher to understand the child's actions on that particular day and make allowances." Testing also was used to assist the teacher. When a pupil was tested by pupil assessment arrangements were made for the tester to have a conference with the teacher to interpret the test results, make recommendations concerning the program the child should follow in view of the test results, any modification in the way the child should be handled etc. In several instances also assistance was given in parent interviews, in some cases by conveying information about the student, in others by taking part in the interview.

An attempt was made to make the guidance office, or as we called it guidance services, an integral part of the program. It was stressed that the outer office was for the use of the pupils at any convenient time. In this office a resource centre was gradually built up with the idea the materials were there to be used by the pupils. Readily available were books and pamphlets, records, tapes, filmstrips and the machines to use these materials. Many students spent time at noon hour or after 4p.m. looking up information. This had a beneficial side effect in that many

students used these as an approach to an interview. It also assisted me since it provided an additional contact with the students. In an effort to keep the material as current as possible tapes were made of radio broadcasts for student use.

Several activities outside the school enhanced the program. One of the major concerns of the grade eight pupils is the new collegiate. All collegiates were visited by the student that would be attending them the following year. Efforts were made to increase and improve communications between these schools and Norseman. I visited some before the pupils and took coloured slides in some cases, particularly of technical sections, to illustrate the type of school. The heads of guidance were given as much information as possible to assist them in placement in the collegiate. All junior schools that are feeder schools for Norseman were visited. At that time I briefly gave the pupils some indication of major changes such as rotary and also showed a series of coloured slides of our school. A few weeks later this was followed up by a visit of the junior schools to Norseman at which time they toured the building.

There are two duties that complement the guidance program in the school. One is the responsibility for phoning parents of grade eight pupils concerning attendance. This provides a contact which can lead on occasion to such things as suggesting homework be sent home, a brief discussion of the pupil's progress and/or arranging an interview if this is felt to be worthwhile. A second example would be working with the student council. This does take extra time, but meetings are held out of school hours. It provides an excellent opportunity to establish lines of communication with the student body and through the council topics such as discipline, responsibilities of students, guidelines for conduct, school spirit etc. can be handled indirectly.

ERIC This further provides an indirect line to the student's feelings

toward the teachers, which in turn can provide feedback to the teacher concerned and thus help classroom dynamics.

I do not wish to dwell on the physical facilities, but briefly they are as follows. The room used by the pupils was about half the size of a classroom. In it were bookshelves, easy chairs, a couch, several other chairs and an octagonal table that was sometimes used for discussion groups. A coffee table and several small tables lent an informal air to the room. I added several pictures. It would appear that the less the room looks like a classroom, the busier it will be. Two offices opened off this room. Mine was large enough that as well as a desk filing cabinet, bookshelves and a cupboard, I was able to have two easy chairs and a coffee table. These chairs and table were important, I feel, for I did individual counselling here and they lent themselves to a more relaxed atmosphere which is so often an essential part of counselling. The adjoining small room was also a counselling room but was used for extra storage in filing cabinets. It contained a desk and several chairs. This room was often used by teachers for parent interviews and also individual tests were given here. Perhaps the only change I would have liked to have made would be to have a series of carrells along one wall of the larger room to ensure privacy while listening to tapes etc.

Case Studies

In the following section of this report I shall attempt to give a general sample of the types of situation in which I found myself in counselling sessions. Frankly, I was amazed at the number and variety of concerns that were brought to my attention, in particular by the pupils. At the beginning of the year there were not too many referrals but the number began to increase by the end of September and continued to do so all year. One interesting fact was that the pupils test the counsellor to see if he will really keep the counselling session confidential. I know of one case in which I was told some facts by one student and about a week later I was questioned by another student, very subtly, to see if I would betray the confidence, which of course I did not. Purely by accident I later overheard a conversation between these two pupils which most certainly indicated that they had been testing me. From that time onward the one pupil became one of my most regular clients. Perhaps this is as good a place as any to indicate that there are two factors that I feel are most essential to establish any degree of success in counselling. The first is that there must be complete acceptance of the pupil by the counsellor, and I do mean complete. Anything less will cause the student to at least partially reject the counsellor and he will not talk openly to the counsellor or will avoid the major concern he really wants to talk about. The second is that the counsellor must respect and honour the fact that he is told many facts in confidence. Teachers may question this second fact at first but if the situation is well explained and information passed on whenever possible then the situation becomes viable.

Case 1

H. was a boy, 13 years of age in grade 7. He was small in stature ,very wiry in physical stature. His apparent capacity was in the 120 to 130 range , both from group and individual tests. During his entire school career he had a history of achievement much below what would be expected. He also had a long history of discipline problems which became more complex the further he went in school. He was very alert and was often able to anticipate questions or comments by teacher, principal or counsellor before they were made. This often led to undesirable or rude answers. The same situation apparently existed at home where he had by the time he was in grade seven been pretty well rejected by his older brothers and his parents. Many sessions of counselling, in close cooperation with his home room teacher who was also counselling, finally revealed that the one interest he had was auto mechanics, and in this area he was skillful far beyond his years. As a result he was eventually transferred to a vocational school where he could achieve at least a measure of success with more subject areas keyed to his interests. While the adjustment was not a complete success it has in part succeeded.

Case 2

V. was a very mature , 14 year old girl of Italian descent. She was, despite her physical maturity, a very shy girl. On the surface her school work and relations with her peers appeared to be quite normal. On one occasion she entered the outer guidance office, looked at some booklets for a short period of time until it was empty, then suddenly turned to me and asked to talk to me. When we went into the counselling room she was at first very nervous and when she sat down she immediately burst into tears. My reaction to this was simply to hand her a Kleenex and let her have the cry

that she obviously had been holding in check for some time. When she regained her composure, she began to talk. Her parents were very rigid and she felt did not trust her. As an example she said that she was permitted to go to a store directly across the street from her home, only if accompanied by her parent or an aunt. She also had been timed coming home, and if she was as much as one or two minutes late her father started for the school to meet her. These are only examples of several things she mentioned, any infraction causing severe punishment. I felt that this was a place where all I could do was attempt to assist her to understand the reasons, right or wrong, behind her parents thinking. I attempted to explain as best I could that this was a result of her ethnic background, the upbringing of her parents, particularly her father, the family constellation etc. I also pointed out that this would not solve the problem, but hopefully would make it more tenable. At the time I wondered if I really had helped at all, but she was in to see me about several other matters and indicated that it had.

Case 3

R. was a young lad of 13 years of age in grade 8. He was of average intelligence and up to this year had done average work in his academic subjects. However, in grade eight he was greatly influenced by several older boys with the result the academic part of his school work deteriorated rapidly. As a result, in part, of this, R. gradually became a discipline problem and adopted an "I don't care attitude in order to compensate for his lower achievement. At the request of his home room teacher I had R. in for several sessions. At first he was rather hesitant to accept help, feeling that we were just interfering, but gradually this hostility broke down. The result was that over a period of time R. accepted and assisted in a thorough assessment of his work, his potential and the need

for and setting up of remedial work and a strict study schedule in which he could be helped by his teachers, his parents and the counsellor. From an almost certain dropout or potential failure R. changed to an extremely happy boy when in June he was able to proceed to the technical course of his choice with a clear pass grading. The basic ingredient for success in this case was probably the close cooperation and teamwork between teacher, parents and the counsellor.

Case 4

Occasionally a counsellor is placed in a position where he must decide how much he is prepared to risk to help a child. This happened in the case of A. a grade 8 girl. Up to this point in her school career no problems had existed. The girl was an excellent student, well mannered, in fact was highly regarded by both staff and students alike. She showed many qualities of leadership and was a mature well adjusted young lady. Suddenly a very rapid change took place and she became about as completely opposite to her former self as possible. School work, manners, attitude, personal appearance all changed drastically and she became uninterested, rude, crude and generally a very unlikeable person. Partially because of my own observations, also because of a request by the home room teacher, I called her in for an interview. The climate in the counselling room was charged. She was wondering why she had been called in and thus was tense, nervous and very much on the defensive. I, for my part was also concerned for I realized that I was treading on rather private ground which could result

in criticism. The major problem was one of conduct and language in connection with boys, which was crude to say the least. At first we talked in a general manner but gradually the course of the conversation was steered toward my major concern. She was very reticent to admit she was acting this way but grudgingly did so after a time. I felt at this point that this was one case where honesty was the best policy, and since the girl was definitely worth taking the effort for, I decided to literally, "Go out on a limb". Basically I stated, "This is the way I see your actions and your teacher agrees and was concerned enough about you to speak to me to see if we can help you. Please believe that we are not in any way attempting to interfere in your private life. I will tell you what we feel, you may assess what I say and accept it or reject it, as you wish. If you act thus and so with certain individuals, then the result will be thus and so. This is rather blunt but it is simply a statement of fact. The problem is now yours to deal with as you see fit. Rather by coincidence, I received a telephone call from the girl's mother that afternoon expressing very deep concern about the same matter and requesting that I help if I could. I informed her of the interview, giving her as much information as possible without betraying confidence. About three weeks later the home room teacher commented on the drastic change for the better in every aspect. One of the most rewarding features of my year's work was a visit from this girl on the last day of school, when she made a point of thanking me for calling her in for the interview.

Case 5

Often the child is caught in a series of circumstances at home which are a vital influence in their life, yet because of the fact

that the parent may be too close to the situation or may be very involved in it, the parent cannot be the person to whom the child turns for help or understanding. Such was the case of L. a grade seven girl. The situation at home had been difficult for some time as the parents were considering divorce. Finally the father had left the home completely but continued in every way possible to exert an influence on L. and attempt to get her to leave her mother also. When divorce proceedings were begun she was faced with the decision of choosing between her parents, both of whom wanted custody. Of course all the sordid details are not here, suffice it to say that here was a young girl, caught in the middle of a divorce action, loving both her parents and being called upon to assist in making a decision as to which parent she would prefer to be with. Whether her decision would have any bearing in court or not, I do not know, but she was most disturbed by it and came to the counselling office to obtain help if possible. She desperately needed someone to talk to and basically this is what we did. She discussed at great length the pros and cons of any action she might take or be required to take by the courts. As much as possible I passed on information or helped her clarify her thinking but the basic decisions were hers. This would indicate that often the counsellor can serve best by being a sounding board for the child's thoughts and reasoning.

Case 6

Sometimes an incident which to a casual observer might seem insignificant will be of extreme importance to the child. W. a boy in grade six came to me one day and upon entering the office burst into tears. The circumstances were simply that he felt he had no friends and found it very hard to approach a classmate or other student to offer or cultivate friendships. While an older

person might tend to shrug this type of situation off or simply tell him not to worry because everything would work itself out W. was not prepared to accept this type of answer. To him the situation had reached catastrophic proportions. Fortunately at the particular time he came in we were just about to begin a series of lessons in grade six dealing with this very subject, viz getting along with others, manners, how to make friends, what makes a good friend etc. I discussed this for a short time with him and then suggested that we leave the subject for now, take some of the classes, then if the situation still was bothering him he could come and see me again. As it happened, he was in to see me again but never about the above problem which apparently resolved itself as the year progressed.

Case 7

Up to this point no mention has been made of an important source of help the counsellor has, that is outside services such as Family Services. C. is a case in point. She was a delicate child, grade six, and came from a family that found that it was difficult to make ends meet from day to day. The father had been seriously injured in an accident at work and was self employed in the watch repair business since his injury. There were three children. The mother had found it difficult to cope with this situation and in addition was in poor health. C. was having a difficult time at school, she was highly strung, very nervous and found it very difficult to adjust to any new situation such as a rotary system. In addition she had academic difficulty. We were in the process of attempting to help her with remedial work and individual help in several areas when her mother became severely ill and subsequently died. This was a terrible shock to C. Fortunately because of our previous contact with the home we were able to move very quickly, contact Family Services and through them have

a volunteer worker in the home the day after her mother's death. Arrangements were also made through the Counselling and Attendance Offices at the Board Office to have a counsellor visit the home on a regular basis. This was a supplement to visits that had been made previously but not on a regular basis. At no time had the father been overly communicative, but he did telephone the school to express his appreciation of the help given, C., by the way settled down in school and began to show some signs of progress.

Case 8

In some instances the counsellor can work with the classroom teacher very closely. A typical example of this would be the case of B. This was a girl of 13 years of age, relatively low in natural capacity who had spent the four previous years in an opportunity class (special classes for extremely low achievers, low natural capacity). This year she had been transferred to a Middle School, which did not have any streamed classes or at the time of transfer any special remedial groups. She found herself confronted with two main problems, the first of adjusting to the school, rotary and all it entailed, the second a social adjustment from small classes and school to a large class in which she was the oldest pupil. At first she appeared to be able to cope reasonably well, but as the year progressed she began to fall behind in her schoolwork and in frustration compensated by becoming a real social and discipline problem. Her home room teacher attempted to deal with this within the classroom at first, then came to the guidance services to see if we could suggest any possible solutions. The teacher and the counsellor spent a considerable amount of time to review all her records etc. and then a consultation was held with the principal. Following this further assistance was obtained from the counselling

services at the Board Office and a consultant sat in on the case. Working together a behavior modification schedule was set up. B. was given a certain list of responsibilities that she was to take special care with each day, for example, not disturb anyone in a class. Each teacher that she encountered during the day was made aware of the program, what we were attempting to accomplish, and was asked to initial a timetable that B. carried with her to all classes. Certain standards were set, minimal at first, and if B. met these standards for a prescribed period of time she was permitted to take part in unified arts, a subject she was extremely anxious not to miss by default. Within a very short time a change was evident in B's behavior, schoolwork began to improve. The home room and indeed rotary teachers commented on how earnestly she was trying. Within about three weeks the home room teacher remarked that the entire atmosphere of the class had been changed, B. was no longer baiting pupils or being bated, discipline problems that had existed, disappeared. Incidentally, B's parents were kept well informed at all times of our plans and our progress. They were quite delighted with the results and indicated a change of attitude at home as well. The counsellor would do well to remember that the parents often are as concerned as he, and can be a valuable ally.

Case 9

There were occasions when as a counsellor I found myself quite frustrated by a situation in which I wanted to help and could not to any great extent. The consultants in the guidance department at the Board Office and I joked on occasion about the times a counsellor needed a counsellor. However, in all seriousness I feel that there are times when this is true. One of my reasons

for saying this was L., a grade 7 boy, short, obese, relatively high intelligence, very serious about school, life et al. The real cause of frustration however, was not the boy but his mother. She had a history of problems with the school and all connected with it from the time L. had entered kindergarten. Being the type of child he was, L. was subject to ridicule by his classmates. He used two ways to defend himself, first he assured all teachers and the principal that he did no wrong and was being picked on which incidently was not true as he was just as mean to his peers, secondly all that had taken place in the school was daily reported to mother. Periodically mother would call the school and heads were supposed to roll. No amount of explanation of the true situation, or countless attempts to have her in for an interview had any effect. An attempt was made to have an outside agency do counselling in the home, this was haughtily spurned. The guidance services in the school tried in any way possible to assist L. to adjust and get along with his peers but we felt that any small gains we made were to a large extent nullified by the home situation. Someday, hopefully, provision will be made so that assistance can be given in the home where it is needed whether the person is willing to accept it at first or not. I found this type of case most frustrating because it was most time consuming. Finally it was necessary, despite my firm belief that a counsellor should be available when the child wants him, to put this particular case on a priority list and sometimes attend to more urgent cases first.

Case 10

One situation comes to mind in which I did go into the home. C. A. was a very bright student and up until this year in grade 7 had managed to cope with any situation in which she found herself. She entered my office in a very nervous state and literally blurted

out that she found life at home intolerable. She further stated that she was now 12 and if things continued the way they were, as soon as she was 16 she planned to run away. I was aware that she came from a relatively good home in a middle income district, she was well dressed and did not seem to lack anything the other pupils had. As she talked, the following facts came to light. Three problems were causing concern. Her father worked out of the city and was home only on weekends, her mother had been quite ill for some time and finally an older sister had been married, had two children and the marriage had broken up. The sister returned to her parents home. Mother became very overprotective to the older daughter, treating her almost as a sister. As a result C.A. was required to look after the younger children almost constantly while mother was out with the older sister. She also was required to do many chores around the house that father ordinarily would have done such as mowing the lawn etc. This meant that she never had any time to herself, no time for her own friends and far too many responsibilities for a girl of her age. I checked into these details and found them to be true, so contacted a counsellor at the Board Office. After some discussion we felt it was necessary, with C.A.'s permission, to approach the mother, for apparently she was in complete ignorance of the fact that any problem existed. An appointment was made to see the mother, in her home, at her convenience. I was a bit apprehensive about the outcome, but at this point we were committed. As the situation developed, the mother received us most graciously. I was interested in the mother's unawareness of the situation she had created. After perhaps an hours discussion, guidelines were set up, to which the mother agreed. To the best of my knowledge these have been successful in removing the problem.

Case 11

M. was a 13 year old girl in grade 8. I saw her for counselling many times during the year. This was a situation where there was no solution but counselling provided a safety valve for M. She was an adopted child, her mother was very strict and absolutely rigid, her word was law. Father had more or less accepted this fact and let himself be ruled. For some reason the mother had an obsession about M. getting into trouble, to such an extent that she was not even permitted to do such things as go shopping with another girl her own age, never attended a party etc. Along with this she had a violent temper and tended to be moody. When she was angry she would lash out verbally at the nearest person, but in particular at M. One day for example, in an angry mood, she told M. that her real mother was a prostitute. Obviously M. was deeply disturbed by this statement. On several occasions attempts were made to establish communication with the mother, but all efforts failed. Thus the counselling gave M. an opportunity to talk these situations over, attempt to understand them and relieve the pressure on her.

Case 12

If I were to write about the most interesting character I have ever met, this lad, J., would be a likely candidate. From outward appearances it would be almost natural for a person who did not know J. well to label him as lazy, shiftless, in fact almost a hippy type. He was in grade 8, very low academically, despite a relatively high natural capacity, and was in constant trouble with the teachers. I had him in a small group counselling session consisting of eight boys. It took several weeks for him to become involved, but when he did I was amazed at his knowledge and understanding of human nature, of the people with whom he

came in contact and particularly of his peers. Time and again he quietly inserted the correct word or bit of advice in the group discussions, and when he spoke the other boys listened. I suppose the real reason I mention J. as a case study is because he taught me far more than I helped him. He was literally an encyclopaedia of facts about the world of young people today. Peer groups, dating, motorcycles, drugs ... you name it and he had the information. On several occasions I took the time to check his information and he was always right. I am not suggesting that every counsellor should have a J. to supply information, but I am suggesting that perhaps all too often we tend to label first and listen later when probably the reverse should be true. At the beginning of the sessions J. was a sure, confirmed dropout as soon as he reached sixteen. Even then he knew where he was going and why. He had accepted his low marks, he knew he could not be successful in a regular collegiate. As a compromise he had decided he wanted to go to Northern Ontario as he was a very keen hunter and fisherman. He also felt he could get a job at manual labour in a small industry. The group sessions did accomplish more than I had realized. After about six sessions the teachers commented on a change in attitude for the better. At the end of the year I was told by the other members of the group that J. was not dropping out of school in one year as he had planned, instead he was taking the full three year vocational course. He did not tell me as it was to be a surprise the following year, but the boys felt I should know. He still intends to eventually go north, but hopefully he will be better prepared.

Case 13

This final case study concerns a situation that is probably common to all counsellors, indeed to teachers as well, whether they are counsellors or not. Two indignant looking boys entered my office and asked if it would be possible to see me immediately. The cause of the indignation was a conflict with the teacher, which they said had been going on for some time. I was aware of this conflict, which was partly justified. I felt that as a professional person my duty was to support the teacher but I also felt I had an obligation to solve the problem if possible. At the beginning of the session I let them discuss the situation quite openly, thus ridding themselves of much of the pent up emotion. We then began to assess the situation. Several suggestions came from the boys as to how the problem might be solved. If these did not work, and if they still felt as strongly about it as when they came to me, my suggestion was that they should see the principal as this was under his jurisdiction. I had earlier suggested that they see the teacher and talk matters over but they felt that in this case nothing would be gained. A further suggestion was that the teacher might be included in this discussion if the principal approved. They welcomed this idea and expressed the feeling (as students did on many occasions) that teachers could often be a part of a discussion, particularly small groups. The problem was resolved as it was never taken to the principal.

The previous pages have attempted to give some idea of the type of counselling encountered in a Middle School. Needless to say it is only a small sampling of the many diverse situations met in the course of a school year. To me personally, counselling would seem to be the heart of the guidance services and I say this with a full awareness of the limitations of time, staff etc. I say it because of the many times students have come to see me about option sheets, study problems, social problems, unhappiness for a multitude of reasons both at home and at school. I say it because more than ever after ^{aa} a period as a full time counsellor I know the pupils need a non-authoritarian figure in the school to whom they may talk openly, without fear of disciplinary action, to reason out the normal problems of growing up and adjusting to the adult world. This viewpoint is justified in my opinion by the fact that in our school, which up until last year had no guidance, there were over five hundred self referrals from the students, approximately seventy from the teachers plus perhaps another fifty that were the result of action by the principal or the counsellor.

Comments On and Evaluation Of the Guidance Program As It Has
Operated In Norseman Middle School 1969 - 1970.

In an effort to obtain a true picture of the guidance program a questionnaire was distributed to the principal, vice-principal, teachers and pupils. At that time a request was made that it be an honest evaluation both for and against, in order that the program could be assessed and necessary changes made. All persons completing the survey were asked to remain anonymous to permit a free expression of opinions. The following is a summary of the opinions expressed.

PRINCIPAL

Q. In what ways have the guidance services been of help to you this year?

A. Many problems of students have been talked out before they became a real crisis.

The counsellor was another person who was available to help the teachers, to discuss with them how to help pupils having difficulties.

The counsellor was another person who was available to help parents with specific problems. An advantage was that he was not directly associated with the academic side of the child's development.

Student Council has been looked after well.

Q. In what ways could the guidance services have been more effective?

A. We need to find some way of reaching more pupils. Ideally to be able to prevent difficulties before they become a crisis situation would be the goal.

Q. What advantage (if any) is there in having a counsellor in the school as well as a central service centre upon whose service you may call in various crisis situations as the need arises?

A. Action can be taken much faster.

There is more feedback to the teachers.

Results can be interpreted to the teachers by the counsellor thus saving time.

The children relate faster when academic problems are not stressed.

Q. How do you feel the guidance services and the program has been accepted by (a) the staff (b) the students?

A. (a) Well particularly if the staff member has been directly involved with a special problem.

(b) Well, but we have not yet found a way of reaching the more serious personal problems on a self referral basis.

Q. Do you feel the benefits gained from the guidance services justify the expenditure on salary, equipment etc?

A. Yes. The area is becoming a real resource centre.

Q. What recommendations would you make for the further development of this servicei.e. program, referrals etc.?

A. Regular meetings with teams of teachers to discuss how the teacher and guidance personnel can assist each other.

Early identification and remedial help for potential problems.

More group meetings (maximum of eight students) with students having similar difficulties.

A regular teacher and counsellor meeting to discuss individual students.

The vice-principal was asked the same questions as the principal. His answers were as follows.

Q1 Students have a designated person to whom students may take problems.

Another person is available to assist teachers in dealing with pupil problems.

A resource person is available to sit in on parent - teacher conferences.

Q2 More work with discipline problems in an attempt to prevent pupils from getting into difficulties in class.

Some adjunct to the self-referral system is needed.

Q3. Avoidance of long delays in getting action when counselling is needed.

There is more feedback of non-confidential information in order that staff may be aware of difficulties which students have and may be more sympathetic to the student.

Q4 Especially well with teachers who have been helped directly.

Q5 Very well by those students who have availed themselves of the service. It would have been even more successful if we could find ways of having some of the discipline problems more involved in personal counselling.

Q5 Yes. With more time to integrate the student services we can expect to accomplish much more in the future.

Q6 A closer liason between the counsellor and the classroom teacher (perhaps to be achieved through regular meetings with teaching teams to discuss problems and possible attempts at solutions).

A very intense effort to identify potentially difficult students and students with problems so that they can be

directed into a group or individual counselling situation by whatever means are necessary.

Neither the principal or the vice-principal felt that the role of the counsellor was in any way in conflict with their role in the school.

TEACHERS

Q. In what ways has the guidance service been of help to you this year?

A. In the placement of students, advancement classes, remedial classes etc.

In dealing with behavioral problems , diagnosing the difficulty, counselling, planning with the teacher, setting up a program for behavioral modification.

In the testing of pupils for various reasons, interpretation of test results, suggesting a follow up program as a result of the test findings.

Assisting pupils to set up study schedules.

Assisting pupils in their choice of options in collegiate.

Provided individualized attention for the students for their personal problems such as social problems, emotional problems.

Provided a person to whom the teacher could relate when concerned about student problems of many kinds.

Provided the teacher with a better understanding of the problems faced by individual students.

Provided alternate class management methods.

Provided a liason between the home and the teacher. In some cases acted as a resource person for parent-teacher conferences.

Provided a liason between the teacher and special services at the board office such as case conferences, family services, psychological services etc.

Q. In what ways could the guidance service have been more effective?

A. Try to reach the shy student who has a problem but will not approach the counsellor on their own initiative. Time permitting , interview the "average" student who is making good all round progress. Time permitting , much more individual counselling and counselling with small groups on a regular basis. Improve the communications with the teachers concerned with a pupil interviewed. For example , after an interview send a note to the teacher stating simply , ." L. has a problem at home". Tactful suggestions given to the teachers as to the nature of the problem, how the child might be helped. This would be particularly important to new teachers. Teachers with a problem child or a problem of their own might have a regularly scheduled meeting with the counsellor to discuss how to deal with the child, classroom management etc. Attempt to reach more pupils with minor problems thus preventing major problems. Closer follow up on students interviewed, particularly those who do not seem to be responding. Keep the time lapse between a request for an interview and the interview to a minimum. Provide a list of alternate counsellors that the pupils could see if they wished. These people must be trained.

Q. What advantages are there (if any) in having a counsellor in the school as well as a central service centre upon whose service you may call in various crisis situations as the need arises?

A. The counsellor is known by the students and knows them.

Therefore the students are less shy and the counsellor is more effective than an outsider.

The counsellor provides relief for the teacher and the class with "crisis" children.

Diagnosis and possible treatment or referral to an outside agency take place when the need is there.

The counsellor acts as a tempering agent with the teacher and pupils; teacher ,pupil and parent.

The students see the counsellor as a definite non-administrative person to whom they may always go to seek help.

A professionally trained counsellor is always available to help the students and/or the teacher. The immediacy of this help is very important.

The counsellor can act as a liason person between teacher, parents, special services etc.

The counsellor , on occasion , provides remedial solutions, assists the teacher in dealing with problem students.

A minor problem can often be headed off before it becomes a major problem.

Behavioral modification was most successful in several cases. The counsellor being in the school was able to implement it quickly and act as a control and assist the child.

Q. How do you feel the guidance services have been accepted by the students?

A. All teachers indicated they felt it was well accepted. One indicated total acceptance.

In addition to the above the following comments were made: The students who need guidance most are often the ones who are most reluctant to use it or are negative toward it. The students indicated that they liked the confidentiality, the fact that they could speak openly and not be criticized, the small groups.

Two of the crisis cases stated that the guidance office was the only place in the school where there was someone who would listen to you and not pick on you.

The teachers also said that those students who made use of the guidance services were usually more positive in their outlook after.

Q. What recommendations would you make for the further development of this service?

A. In the case of a personality conflict between the teacher and a pupil, I would like to have the teacher involved at some point in the discussion with the child.

Give more information to the staff, possibly by an exchange of ideas at a staff meeting or small group meetings.

Regularly scheduled periods to discuss various concerns of the staff members.

More trained guidance counsellors to give the students a choice of counsellors and to ensure availability of a counsellor when needed. The ratio in this school is far

too large ..counsellor / pupil. It is impossible for one counsellor to deal adequately with 550 children.

No scheduled classes, rather use an overlay program in which a unit could be taught as needed i.e. option sheets and the choice of courses for high school done one period a day for a week . This would make use of natural motivation and also lend itself to continuity.

Use much more group work with small groups (maximum of eight students).

Introduce parents of new student who enter the school during the year, to the program, the school etc.

Much more emphasis on counselling.

Q. Have you felt that the role of the counsellor was in any way in conflict with your role as a teacher?

A. All teachers replied , " No " Further comments were made such as:

definitely helpful.

teacher cannot do all a counsellor can because of lack of time and training.

it was a supportive reinforcing role.

helpful in conflicts of all kinds.

Further comments or suggestions?

The teachers suggested that the counsellor might consider working in the following areas

Assisting first year teachers.

assisting with report card comments.

assisting with the writing of comments on C.S.R.s

STUDENTS

Q. Do you feel the guidance services were of any personal value to you? Please state briefly why you answered as you did.

A. Yes: 48 students

No: 26 students

Unsure: 1 student

It helps choosing friends etc.

It helped answer questions about things I was not too sure about.

I felt free to state opinions and discuss.

I feel better after a discussion whether it completely solves the problem or not.

It helped me to understand some teachers and their viewpoint.

It helped me to understand my parents.

It helped on topics such as ...drugs, study, further education, peer groups, emotions, dating, prejudice etc.

It helped with choosing collegiate options.

It was better than my other school, it had no guidance.

I had one person I could talk to at any time in confidence about things I could not discuss with my parents.

Q. Have you had any personal counselling this year?

A. Yes ..Once 48%

Two to five times 12%

Over five times 6%

Never 34%

Q. If you felt it was of value (or not of value) please state why.

A. Same reasons as the question above

Helped me with my schoolwork and my marks improved.

Helped me with my parents.

I got a study schedule and it worked.

I had a problem with a friend and solved it.

I was able to share my problem.

It helped me with a social problem.

Q. How many times have you visited the guidance offices this year (for any reason)?

A. The answers varied. The average for the school would be about once per pupil. The ratio was approximately the same as for the first question.

Q. What sort of problems or concerns would you bring to the guidance services?

A. Problems concerning:

personal matters

peer relationships

parents

teachers

school work such as study habits, report cards, extra help.

to get information about collegiate, options, occupations.

school problems such as making friends etc.

Q. Would you prefer interviews arranged by (a) the counsellor (b) the teacher (c) your request by self referral?

A. By the counsellor ..20 students

By the teacher.....12 students

By self referral....42 students

Q. What kind of information do you feel should be kept in the guidance office for your reference?

A. Tapes, pamphlets, books and booklets, records, filmstrips. Topics should place emphasis on the guidance lessons and include occupations, collegiate, study skills, emotions, peer groups and relationships, parents.

Q. How do you feel about the guidance classes? Have they been helpful to you? Please give a reason for your answer.

A. Basically the answers were the same as for the first question of the survey. However 60% of the students indicated they felt it would be more useful if the lessons were grouped. Two examples given were orientation to the new school and option sheets. The suggestion was that these be done in a series of lessons for a period of a week or so rather than one lesson a week. Orientation would be done as soon as possible in September, option sheets could be done in January or February depending on the requirements of the collegiates.

Q. Which topics dealt with this year do you feel were most useful to you personally?

A. Drugs, option sheets, collegiate orientation, emotions, peer groups, parents, teachers. These of course varied depending on the grade level.

Further comments or suggestions.

More small discussion groups. Pupils would feel freer and become more involved in the discussions and learn more.

Mix up the groups for discussion for classes. That way we would get ideas from our own class and from others.

Use as much student participation as possible as you did in role playing, letting the students teach, discussion groups etc.

Twelve boys included in the group answering the questionnaire were also in small group discussions. They answered one further question

Q. What value (if any) was group counselling to you?

A. It gave me a chance to talk more freely about things that I would not discuss in class even in a discussion period. It helped me to know myself better.

Some of the topics were ones that would not be brought up in class, yet they were topics we were interested in.

It helped me in relation to peers , to understand another person's viewpoint and accept it. I listened to things the boys said to criticize me and correct me and accepted them, but I would not accept them the same way from a teacher or my parents.

It made me decide to finish school rather than drop out as soon as I was sixteen.

I found out what people think of me and my personality and this helped me.

With a small group you could participate more and get more out of the discussion. You were not embarrassed and could talk about anything.

All boys participating in the group were most reluctant to end the sessions the last week before school closed.

Several commented that I was to be sure to have more small groups next year since they found them the most valuable part of the program.

Evaluation, Suggestions for Possible Changes, Priorities,
Possible Improvements.

As the counsellor involved in the pilot project in guidance in Norseman Middle School, I find it difficult to evaluate. I say this because it is often easier to evaluate from a distance than from close up. Personally I felt that several positive forward steps were made and I believe the comments of my colleagues in the evaluation sheets they submitted will bear me out in this. One of the difficulties of a pilot project is its very newness, a flood of ideas and goals that it would be impossible to fulfil in any one year. Specifically, however, this was the result as I saw it.

As many of the pupils commented, the program filled an urgent need of the pupils for a non-authoritarian figure in the school to whom they were able to turn as need arose to assist them in making decisions, solving problems, in effect help them with the concerns of growing up. More than once a student would comment that they were able to come to me and discuss some concern that for a variety of reasons they felt unable to discuss with a parent or a teacher. The fact that there was a strong feeling of confidentiality aided these discussions. The fact that I attempted to see their problem as they saw it, and did so without criticism or comparison with another student was of value to them.

Many pupils expressed appreciation of the small discussion groups, others who did not take part requested to be admitted next year. It was beneficial to all concerned, including the counsellor, to be able to sit and openly discuss many concerns without fear of ridicule, criticism and in confidence. These sessions, I believe, helped the students involved to begin to think through their own problems, to accept the ideas and suggestions of others.

The staff ,I hope, benefited in several ways. The guidance services provided a resource centre which gave them an opportunity to discuss concerns of many kinds. In addition it was a liason to other sources that could be of assistance. In some cases assistance was given in crisis situations. Behavioral modification, testing and test interperetation, suggestions on classroom management,pupil behavior,emotional problems of pupils ,diagnosing and suggesting possible solutions for pupil problems, liason between teacher, parent, outside services - these were of assistance to the teacher.

However, all was not a completely successful venture. Some students were not reached that should have been, too many cases were crisis oriented. Perhaps I could attempt to justify these by stating,"Time did not permit" , but hopefully next year a solution can be found. Probably the best evaluation would be that given by the entire staff and the principal as they were the people who did or did not receive benefit from the guidance services.

As I see the guidance program, the following are changes that I would suggest should be made to improve its efficiency and to have an even greater influence in the school. I most certainly am not qualified, nor do I wish to criticize but I feel that a major change should be made in the program.I say this because I, and many other counsellors I have talked to, feel that one period a week ,regularly scheduled for prescribed lessons can no longer be justified. This does not mean that " guidance lessons " should be discarded however. Most counsellors would agree , I believe, that one of the major problems of teaching guidance is motivation. This is so for several reasons, among them the fact that there is a considerable overlap into other subject areas, that the topics cannot always be introduced at a time when interest will be high

or can be generated. For these then, and other reasons the lessons are unproductive. My suggestion would be this. Instead of regularly scheduled lessons, use an overlay program. By this I mean use many of the same lessons but use them at an opportune time. An example would be a unit on study skills with a grade six class. What more opportune time could there be than when they enter the new, strange world of the middle school and so much responsibility is placed on their shoulders. By teaching these skills at the beginning of the year, they could become an integral part of their abilities and serve them throughout their school years. This would involve taking one period a day (from different subjects) for a period of about one week, but the job would be done at a time when it could be most useful. The advantages would also include the fact that the counsellor would have more free time in blocks of time for counselling on a group or an individual basis. One possible deterrent would be the fact that the counsellor would not see the pupils on a regular basis in class and might not know them as well. This could be easily solved for is it not the continuing responsibility of the counsellor to become known to and to know the pupils? This could be done by class-room visits, meeting them in the guidance resource area and many other ways.

A second area in which I feel that progress could be made is that of group counselling. This involves groups of a maximum of eight students, either all boys, all girls or a mixed group. I did some work with this in an experimental way this year and any feedback I have had whether from teachers or the pupils involved indicates it is beneficial. Basically this method involves a discussion in which the students are permitted to talk about any topic they wish.

In order to be successful a few basic requirements must be met. The group must agree that anything said within the group is absolutely confidential. It is wise to contract a certain number of sessions, possibly six then agree to evaluate. It is important that the members of the group be chosen carefully, for it is necessary to have at least two pupils who will act as control for these are needed as leavening. The counsellor should, as much as possible, remain in the background and act only as a resource person unless he is asked by the group to become a part of the group. If this is the case he will join but must, as is true in any case, be completely accepting, not critical, not an authority figure and more often than not be prepared to let one of the group correct another or make the suggestion for the group will accept these statements from a peer but not as well from the counsellor. In my groups this year I had some boys who were considered real problems. At the end of the group sessions several teachers commented on the changes in attitude etc. that had come about. The boys themselves were most reluctant to stop the groups. In my humble opinion this is one area of guidance that should be thoroughly investigated and utilized. It would seem to offer several advantages, one being that eight students can be involved in counselling at one time. To counsellors who are always pressed for time this offers the opportunity to counsel many more students in the given period of time. A second advantage is that often results can be achieved in a group that cannot in individual counselling, simply because the students will accept a statement from their peers that they will reject if an adult, particularly a teacher or parent says it.

A third area that should be given serious consideration ,I feel, is the fact that invariably much of the counsellor's work tend to be related to crisis oriented situations. The reasons why are obvious, lack of trained personnel, the society in which we live etc. I would submit ,however, that serious thought should be given to this problem and action taken.The answer is very complex,time, money and talent would need to be involved, but it could be solved. Perhaps a logical starting point would be in the school. In almost every school there are teachers, who given the incentive , would take training. These should be sought out and encouraged to do so. On having completed their training they should be placed in situations where they could use it. Perhaps I am prejudiced, but I know many teachers , who given the opportunity would welcome the chance to work in the guidance area and have no opportunity to do so. My feeling about this is the same as one of our staff members when he answered the questionnaire.. "For God's sake lets use them" thereby benefiting the entire educational system. The counsellors in the schools, given support, could also gradually reduce the number of crisis situations by making an intensive effort to reach these long before they became a crisis. This requires a complete team effort by all the staff, teachers, principal and counsellor working together to begin action before a crisis is reached. Basically what I am saying is repetition of a point that to me is of prime importance, "That guidance is a team effort requiring them talents and cooperation of everyone concerned with the education of the child.

The above concern leads directly to the fourth suggestion. It would appear from what I have observed in the schools and from the comments of fellow counsellors that we have put the cart before the horse.Is not the basic need in the junior schools, i.e. grades one to five, in fact in kindergarten as well? The old adage says that

an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Should we not ,then, be realistic and face the problem at its source, the earlier grades. It is common knowledge that by the time a child is a teenager his personality and attitudes toward life are almost completely developed. Guidance then should be preventative , not remedial and should begin in kindergarten . There it could seek and find the problem in its initial stages, remedial action could be taken and likely a solution found. I am firmly convinced that many of the problems encountered in the middle school could have been eliminated in a much earlier grade if counsellors had been available. Teachers do help many young people, but let's be honest. It is an impossibility for a teacher to give specialized help to all she encounters who need it when she also has a responsibility for a class. In addition, some cases require a particular type of training which she may not possess. There are teachers in the lower grades who feel this need very strongly, I have talked to many of them. Should we not then make an all out effort to offer help? I would submit the suggestion that guidance must move into the lower grades as rapidly as possible, for until it extends from kindergarten throughout the school system it will not exhibit its full potential.

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It should be noted that these books were not used directly for this study per se but rather as resource material throughout the year.

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