

Benchmark Case Conceptualization & School Counseling Services Plan Template

Internship Student Name: Lucia Kollat

Internship Site: Riverview Elementary School

Elementary School __X__ **Middle School** ____ **High School** ____

K-12 Student Pseudonym: JJ **Session:** 1 of 4

Please note:

The K-12 student's actual name **will not** be used in this assignment for confidentiality purposes. A pseudonym only is to be used to protect the identity of the K-12 student.

<p align="center">Case Conceptualization & School Counseling Services Plan</p> <p align="center">Individual counseling is a direct, responsive service that involves one-to-one counseling with a student. (Be sure to address the questions/comments for each component)</p>	<p align="center">Points</p>
<p>Component #1: Case Conceptualization and Appraisal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain procedures for addressing confidentiality and the limits to confidentiality. <p>There are many steps taken in order to address confidentiality within the school counseling field. The student being serviced in this case conceptualization is student JJ who is 8 years old and is in the second grade at Riverview Elementary School. According to JJ's past report cards, and SOL scores, JJ is on grade level and is able to understand developmentally appropriate material and language. The school counselor has a poster in the office which explains confidentiality in a developmentally appropriate way. Poster states: What you say in here stays in here unless, someone is hurting you, you want to hurt someone, or you want to hurt yourself. The counselor asked the student questions to ensure their understanding of the statements on the confidentiality poster. For example the counselor asked, if we were talking about the bus, and you told me that someone on the bus was pushing you and hitting you, would that stay in here? Or would that be something that I would have to share with someone else to make sure you are safe? In asking specific questions</p>	<p align="center">___/10</p>

<p>like this, the counselor can help to ensure that the student understands what confidentiality means, and understands the times where the counselor would have to tell someone about what is shared during a counseling session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the parent/guardian contacted to obtain parental permission for school counseling services? Why or why not? <p>JJ's mother was contacted in order to gain parental permission for the student to participate in the counseling sessions with myself, a school counseling intern. In general, at Riverview Elementary School, the school counselor does not need parent permission to see a student, however, because I am a graduate intern, we wanted to contact the parent prior to me meeting with JJ. I also wanted to introduce myself and to create a positive relationship and rapport with JJ's family prior to beginning any short-term counseling sessions. My site supervisor stated that she typically will reach out to parents if a student has been visiting the counseling office more than 5-6 times, and also reaches out to parents about outside referrals and community resources as needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the student/client's observable behaviors, what achievement, attendance, or discipline concerns might you have as a school counselor? <p>The primary concern in regard to JJ is the student's attendance, and also the students behavior in the morning. The student has been coming to school each day this school year, however, in the past has not had adequate attendance and missed a large chunk of their first grade year. This student is new to Riverview Elementary School, coming from a different elementary school within the county. The student has been showcasing behaviors in the morning such as not wanting to get on the bus because they want to stay with mom,</p>	
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<p>excessive crying in the morning when they get off the bus, and reporting immediately to the counseling office when they get off the bus rather than going to the classroom and eating breakfast. The student also showcases some attachment issues at school to the older sibling who is in fourth grade. The older sibling will walk JJ to the counseling office as JJ is crying, and not want to leave JJ until the crying has ceased, however, the fourth grade student is also excited and eager to go to class and be with their peers. Therefore, my concern would be aiding JJ in having a successful morning at school in which JJ is comfortable to get on the bus and leave mom for the day, comfortable to go directly to class with their peers and have breakfast in the classroom with no crying or tears, and to increase overall school attendance for the student this school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please indicate the stakeholders you consulted with regarding this student/client. <p>The stakeholders who I consulted with regarding this student was JJ's second grade teacher, both school administrators (principal and assistant principal) and the other school counselor at our school. I also consulted with JJ's mother when I was gaining consent to meet with JJ. Consulting with these stakeholders gave me excellent insight into JJ and some of the struggles that JJ may be experiencing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After consultation (teachers, administration, parent/guardian, student records, counselors, etc.) what additional information (a more holistic view) will you include with your concerns? <p>After consulting with the stakeholders mentioned above, I gained great insight into JJ and the things that have happened in their life very recently. I learned that JJ's parents have recently separated this summer, and are going</p>	
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through a divorce. I learned that JJ's father came to the school requesting documents on JJ and the older sibling, however, there is currently a court order that states when he is able to see JJ and the older sibling and it must be supervised. I also learned that there may have been some domestic violence within the relationship, and that JJ may have witnessed some of this domestic violence against mom.

- What school counseling services (academic, career, social-emotional) will you provide to the student/client that are within the scope of school counseling practices?

After gaining all of the information on JJ, I believe that the primary focus for JJ will be in regard to social-emotional, and also some academic counseling in regard to the student's attendance. I may also include some support for JJ in orienting JJ to the elementary school because JJ is a new student to Riverview Elementary and this could aid in JJ feeling welcomed into the school and the school community. After consulting with my site supervisor and also the social worker in regard to JJ, we will also provide resources and referral information to JJ's mom due to the very recent family changes, and also the possibility of JJ witnessing domestic violence in the home to ensure they are connected to community resources, and possible outside counseling for JJ and the older sibling during this time.

- Are there additional counseling services/community resources you might consider outside the scope of school counseling (referral) that you believe would be beneficial to the student/client?

As stated above, upon learning about JJ and the many changes going on in the immediate family, as well as the possibility that JJ has witnessed domestic

violence against mom, I believe that an outside referral to counseling could be beneficial, and this also prompted me to consult with the social worker to help connect the family to any resources they might need during this time of transition for the family. I also feel that JJ would benefit from participating in small group counseling, this could be on changing families, dealing with big emotions, and teaching JJ some coping tools to use when they are feeling overwhelmed.

- What school counseling SMART goals might you identify? Be sure to identify achievement, attendance, or discipline goal(s).

There are a few SMART goals to identify in regard to JJ. The first would be in regard to the behavior that JJ is displaying in the morning of not wanting to leave mom and the older sibling and being somewhat overwhelmed with emotions and unable to go to class with their peers in the morning. A goal could be that JJ will report directly to class and eat breakfast with their peers at least three times a week. Once the student is able to accomplish this goal with ease, I would increase it to five days a week so that the student is with their classmates and peers having breakfast 5 days of the school week. Another goal would be for JJ to identify three different ways to help them calm down when they are feeling sad, overwhelmed, or frustrated and for JJ to 1. name how they feel 2. choose a strategy to calm down 3. use the strategy 4. return to the learning environment. Each teacher has a “calm down” corner in their classroom, and the goal would be for JJ to self-elect to utilize the calm down corner, and then to go through the four steps so that they are able to regulate their strong emotions more independently. Lastly, I would like JJ to increase their overall school

<p>attendance, and attend school at least 80% of the school days as evidenced by teacher observation and also attendance records. This would help increase JJ's attendance by about 30% from their first grade year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you involve the student/client in establishing SMART goals? <p>One way the counselor can involve the student in establishing SMART goals is by aiding the student in identifying behaviors that are helpful and unhelpful. Using the unhelpful behaviors (not going to class from the bus and missing breakfast with peers) as a starting point for creating areas for growth with the student and helping the student identify the positives that could grow from changing that unhelpful behavior (making new friends, spending more time with classmates and teacher, being more involved in the classroom community).</p> <p>Another strategy is to help make the goals visual for the student by using a sticker chart, creating a poster about each goal, creating a graph or chart in the student's counseling journal so that the student can see when they are making progress towards reaching their goals. Also helping the student brainstorm different ways to celebrate successes while reaching their goals, and also talking about ways to show resilience when things may not be going the way we would like them to. Lastly, having an open dialogue with the student and allowing them to identify different areas that they are struggling with. Although the counselor may have identified various areas, the student has great insight into their life and what they may be struggling with, therefore it is very important to include student voice and choice in creating and identifying goals.</p>	
<p>Component #2: Developmental, Ethical, and Multicultural Considerations</p>	<p>___/10</p>

- Identify the student/client's culture/ethnicity.

JJ's ethnicity is white/caucasian, JJ is a female student who is 8 years old. JJ has one older sibling who is in fourth grade, and this student attends the same school as JJ. JJ's family is going through a change in that JJ's parents have recently began the process of divorce. JJ also is a new student to Riverview Elementary School. At this time, JJ and the older sibling live with mom full time, and are able to see dad during supervised visits.

- Identify multi-social/cultural considerations in this case. Support your response with a *peer-reviewed journal*.

There are a variety of multi-social/cultural considerations in regard to JJ's case. One imperative consideration again is due to the change within the family in regard to the divorce of JJ's parents. As a school counselor, it is imperative to clearly define the role of the school counselor and the client being serviced (in this case the client is JJ), making sure to state that school counselors are qualified to provide brief-short term counseling services that relate to social/emotional, academic, and career development within the school setting and that outside referrals for therapy can be provided for mental health treatment and care. In doing so, the school counselor can ensure they are maintaining an ethical practice within the scope of professional school counseling (Sanders, 2015). Additionally, it is important to note that research has showcased that children who have experienced a divorce are at a higher level of risk for behavioral, psychological, social, and academic struggles (Connolly, n.d.). In servicing JJ, it is important to utilize research-based interventions in order to ensure that their needs are being met throughout this family transition. For example, focusing on protective factors that the student may already possess is one consideration that may be effective in providing services to JJ. One

protective factor that has been researched in children of divorce is active coping styles, such as problem solving and positive restructuring (Connolly, n.d.). Another consideration in regard to JJ is the possibility that JJ has witnessed domestic violence in the home. Witnessing violence in the home can have a variety of behavioral and emotional effects on children, and this may include trouble sleeping, separation anxiety, physical complaints, hyper vigilance, withdrawal, distractibility, and uncontrollable overt emotional upset (McWhirter, 2008). It is imperative for the counselor to recognize in the case of JJ the possibility of the experience of domestic violence, and the possible effects that may have on JJ and their overall development. In serving JJ, the counselor should again utilize research proven techniques to aid in the processing of the trauma experienced, and to ensure that JJ has a safe, open, and loving environment at school.

- Identify family, school, community, and/or other institutional/environmental barriers that may be interfering with the academic, career, and/or social/emotional development of this student/client.

JJ has a few potential barriers that may be interfering with their academic and social/emotional development. Beginning with family, due to the recent process of divorce within JJ's family unit, and also the possibility of domestic violence within the home, JJ may experience effects which create challenges within their academics and social/emotional development. Also, JJ is a new student to Riverview Elementary School, and may be having some difficulty with all of the transitions and changes going on in their life, this may also create a barrier for JJ. Lastly, JJ is showcasing behaviors in the morning such as school avoidance (not wanting to get on the bus, crying excessively in the morning, not reporting to class in the morning) and also some behaviors such as a strong attachment to mom and not wanting to leave mom in the morning. These behaviors may have an affect on JJ's attendance, and we know that JJ and their family struggled

with regular attendance at the school attended last year. There may be a family or environmental barrier in regard to getting JJ and their sibling to school, which will interfere with JJ's academic performance, and also may cause challenges in establishing a morning routine and schedule to aid JJ in having a predictable routine and environment each day prior to attending school. These barriers are important to explore when creating a plan for serving JJ and their family.

- Identify and discuss at least one piece of research from a *peer-reviewed journal* to support the barriers you identified with regard to impacting the student/client's (academic, career, social, emotional) development.

Although JJ's case displays a variety of barriers, one barrier that become clear immediately is in regard to the family changes and possible exposure to domestic violence. This barrier can have a negative affect on a variety of areas for JJ, including academics and also social/emotional development. Research showcases that children who have been exposed to domestic violence must work through and process their experience in order to curb the possibility of the child experiencing a variety of enduring negative consequences (McWhirter, 2008). Some consequences may include detrimental effects on the overall growth and development of the child as well as noticeable changes in play such as less creativity, expression, and spontaneity (McWhirter, 2008). Therefore, an imperative aspect of serving JJ and their family will be providing outside counseling referrals to aid in addressing the family trauma.

- Specifically indicate 2022 ASCA ethical standards that apply in this case. Include, but do not limit yourself to scope of practice, referral, and supervision.

There are a variety of ethical standards that apply to the case of JJ. Firstly, section A. Responsibility to Students addresses a multitude of duties and responsibilities that the school counselor must act upon in order to maintain an ethical practice. A.6.

<p>indicates the importance of appropriate collaboration, advocacy, and referrals for counseling, which apply to the case of JJ (American School Counseling Association, 2022). As stated previously, JJ and their family are experiencing many complex life events that may require more intensive therapy and services as well as community supports and agencies, it is the ethical responsibility of the school counselor to connect students and families with outside referrals and services provided through the school district as well as collaborating with other staff members (in this case the social worker) to aid in serving the whole child. Another ethical standard in this case relates to section B. Responsibilities to Parents/Guardians, School and Staff. Part B.1 identifies the importance of creating a collaborative relationship with the parents/guardians of students when providing school counseling services (American School Counseling Association, 2022). This is relevant in the case of JJ, and the school counselor has begun this process by reaching out to the mother prior to meeting with JJ. In creating and maintaining an open line of communication, the school counselor can aid in creating a safe and supportive environment for JJ, and their family throughout their time at Riverview Elementary School. Lastly, section A.12 Child Abuse is relevant in the case of JJ. Part e. states the importance of connecting students and families who have experienced abuse/neglect with services through the school district and local community (American School Counseling Association, 2022). Due to the recent process of divorce, and also the possibility of domestic violence within the home, it is imperative for the school counselor to be knowledgeable about the current state laws and school system's procedures in order to effectively advocate for the student and their family. This includes both physical safety and emotional safety in the case of JJ and their family.</p>	
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<p>Component #3: <i>Counseling Theory & Techniques</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What theoretical orientation(s)/technique(s) will you use to counsel this student? Support your choice regarding culture, developmental age/level, and presenting issues with a <i>peer-reviewed journal</i>. <p>In the case of JJ, the primary theoretical orientation/technique that will be utilized is play therapy, as well as Alderian theory (Chen et al., 2021). Play therapy is developmentally appropriate for JJ, as they are in the second grade and are eight years of age. A plethora of research showcases that play therapy is an effective and developmentally appropriate approach which aides children in expressing their thoughts and feelings surrounding divorce and also can be utilized as an assessment of the child and families treatment needs, and therefore could provide excellent information to the school counselor in serving JJ and their family (Chen et al., 2021). Play therapy is appropriate for JJ both in regard to their presenting concerns, and also their developmental stage. For example, children often express themselves through play rather than through verbalization as most adults do. In providing a safe environment for JJ, play therapy could create a medium for JJ to both explore and express their inner world through their symbolic play (Chen et al., 2021). Alderian theory may also be helpful in serving JJ. The Alderian approach is holistic in nature, and takes into account the social nature of human beings and the important role that our relationships play within our personal identity (Chen et al., 2021). Due to the complex nature of JJ's family environment and the changing landscape of JJ's family, this theory is relevant and may be useful in counseling JJ. It is imperative for the school counselor to see the "whole child" when serving students, and this also applies to JJ. Specifically in counseling children, the counselor must recognize that the first social group that children are a part of is within the family unit (Chen et al., 2021). Within the family unit, if the child is unable to form a</p>	<p>___/15</p>
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sense of connection, support, and belonging, there can be a variety of negative outcomes including emotional and behavioral struggles. For these reasons, the use of play therapy and Alderian theory are appropriate in serving JJ.

- What academic and career techniques would you consider counseling this student? Support your choice regarding culture, developmental age/level, and presenting issues with a *peer-reviewed journal*.

There are a few academic techniques that will be utilized in regard to serving JJ, specifically in regard to their school attendance and their overall perception of Riverview Elementary School as a new student to the school community. One of the primary goals for the school counseling program in Spotsylvania County is in regard to attendance, and it is clear that JJ has struggled with attendance in the past and has the possibility of struggling with attendance at Riverview Elementary School. The school counseling department has created a variety of interventions in order to help increase overall student attendance, and to provide targeted supports for students identified as having chronic absenteeism challenges. These interventions will be utilized in the case of JJ, and more targeted interventions can also be used in order to respond in a preventative manner. Some school-wide attendance initiatives include the school-wide “house system” which places students into mixed-grade level houses. Each month the houses meet, and houses can earn points throughout each week by displaying respectful, responsible, and safe behaviors at school as well as displaying regular school attendance and academic achievement. Due to JJ being a new student to the school, the school counselor can provide a more targeted approach to ensuring that JJ understands the house system, how to earn points, why earning points is important and how it ties to positive outcomes such as good grades, regular attendance, social connections, and a safe and caring school environment. Another strategy to use in the case of JJ is ensuring that there is a strong

teacher-student relationship with JJ and their classroom teacher. Research showcases that a major factor in academic achievement and school attendance is the creation and maintenance of positive, caring teacher-student relationships (Košir & Tement, 2013). Therefore, it is imperative to aid JJ's classroom teacher in establishing this relationship in order to increase attendance and academic engagement. Some strategies that the school counselor can collaborate on with the classroom teacher are relationship/classbuilding activities, creating individual time for students/teacher throughout the week, regular positive expression of feelings towards students, showcasing flexibility to meet the individual student needs, and showcasing an interest in the lives of students while forming relationships built on trust and respect (Košir & Tement, 2013).

- What specific positive interventions will you use to assist this student in mediating issues, building resilience, identifying strengths, and developing a plan for wellness? Support your choice with a *peer-reviewed journal*.

There are a few positive interventions that can be utilized in JJ to address resiliency and strength building. One specific intervention will be to explicitly teach and practice mindfulness strategies with JJ. Mindfulness is the act of paying attention, and is also considered to be a self-care activity that builds wellness and promotes overall wellbeing and stress reduction (King et al., 2021). In explicitly teaching mindfulness, the school counselor can aid the student in developing self-regulation skills, increasing overall empathy and self esteem, and decreasing overall feelings of anxiousness, sadness, and anger (King et al., 2021). One specific example of how the school counselor can teach JJ mindfulness strategies is through modeling mindful listening. For example, the counselor can create an activity where the student stays silent, with a calm body and mind, focusing on the inhale and exhale and how that causes our stomach to move up and down. During this silent breathing time, the student is instructed to listen very carefully

for any sounds they might hear (such as the air conditioning blowing, children passing by in the hallway, the sound of their own breathing, etc..) The student can continue to practice this in various settings, through this practice they are able to build their ability to pay attention to the present moment. Another intervention for JJ could be aiding JJ in identifying and practicing personal strengths. One way to do this is through providing JJ the opportunity to participate in a leadership role at Riverview Elementary School. One leadership role is through the safety patrol program. Within this program, students are given a safety patrol sash that they wear each day at school, and have various times throughout the day where they are out in the hallways, cafeteria, gym, and playground helping to monitor safety and looking for responsible, productive, and safe behaviors. Providing this specific opportunity to JJ could aid in their overall self-confidence, and feeling of connection to the school community. It could also serve as an attendance intervention, as it is very important that safety patrol members attend school regularly to keep the school community safe.

- Would group sessions also be appropriate for this student/client? Why or why not?
Identify possible family/home/community/school supports that would be useful to help this student/client succeed in their identified SMART goal(s).

I believe that group sessions would be appropriate for JJ for a variety of reasons. Group counseling could help JJ in making new connections with different peers and adults at Riverview Elementary School. For example, the school counselor's always provide a new student group towards the beginning of the school year, and JJ would be an excellent addition to that group. Another group that is held regularly at Riverview is a changing families small group. JJ could benefit from this small group because it could provide them with skills and strategies on how to navigate their changing family

<p>situation, and also provides JJ with the opportunity to see that they are not alone in their family situation, and that other peers may be having similar experiences. This could create a feeling of comfort, safety and belonging for JJ.</p> <p>There are also a few community supports that could be beneficial for JJ. For example, providing JJ's family with outside referral information would be appropriate in this case due to the complexity of the family situation and also the possible trauma that the family has experienced due to domestic violence. JJ may benefit from outside counseling/therapy to truly process and develop skills to address these traumas. Also, JJ's family may benefit from community resources and support. Consulting with the social worker will be imperative in the case of JJ to ensure that all family needs are being addressed and met. There may be some community support groups for parents and also for children who have experienced divorce or domestic violence. Another support for the family may be in regard to peer support groups. Rappahannock Area Community Services Board (RACSB) provides a variety of peer support groups that are all completely free of charge. Some examples include hope and healing for individuals who have experienced trauma, women's wisdom for women who are in need of a safe and supportive community built on sharing and trust, and also support and share which is a general support group open to anyone who is experiencing challenges within their lives.</p>	
<p>Component #4: Individual Appraisal and Outcomes Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will you assess student/client's progress in using their strengths to build resilience? Identify how your approach is culturally sensitive and takes into account background, ability, and language. <p>One way that JJ could be assessed in regard to their progress towards utilizing strengths and building resilience is through having them participate in a</p>	<p>___/10</p>

strengths inventory and also having them complete various exit slips and informal assessments throughout counseling sessions, including a student counseling journal where JJ will complete activities, record feelings and thoughts, and also reflect on attitudes and behaviors. The strengths inventory utilized could be the Devereus Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) as it is empirically sound and evidence based, and is also culturally sensitive and relevant for children in grades K-8 (*Social and Emotional Learning - Aperture Education*, n.d.). Through utilizing DESSA, exit slips, informal assessments throughout counseling sessions, and tracking progress in a counseling journal, JJ's progress towards utilizing their personal strengths and also resiliency will be documented and the school counselor can also ensure that they are remaining culturally sensitive as well as developmentally sensitive to the needs of the student.

- How will you measure student/client progress toward meeting the identified school counseling SMART goal(s)?
What outcome data will you use to measure achievement, attendance, or discipline?

The primary way that JJ's progress towards meeting school counseling SMART goals is through the use of their counseling journal. Within the journal, the school counselor provides a visual graph in which the student will return to when an aspect of the SMART goal is achieved. In making goals visual for the student, it could help increase overall motivation and also a more clear understanding of how working towards goals is a process, and noticing progress within the journey is important and can also aid in building confidence. The counselor can supplement the student journal by pulling specific data on the student through the district student management system. The counselor can specifically pull attendance data in regard to JJ, as that is an identified area of

need for the student in order to track student attendance to see if the interventions used in counseling are effective, or if they need to be adjusted in order to meet the needs of the student.	
Component #5: Professional/Scholarly Writing Correct grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, spelling, and APA citations. Student includes a references section with proper APA formatting.	___/5
TOTAL	___/50

References

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