

A Conceptual Framework for Counseling Psychologists in Schools

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This article explores how contemporary developmental psychology, specifically developmental-contextualism, provides a conceptual framework for practice and research by counseling psychologists who work with schools. Developmental-contextualism articulates how human development (a) is affected by context, (b) involves bio-psycho-social levels, (c) occurs during the life span, and (d) includes strengths and deficits. The authors delineate how these four developmental principles, in conjunction with the traditional strengths of counseling psychology, can guide the application of effective interventions with school-aged children and their families.

In recent years, the nation's commitment to educational reform has stimulated renewed interest by psychologists in schools and the school-aged population (American Psychological Association, 2001). Psychology's potential contribution to educational reform has been noted within and outside the discipline (American Psychological Association, 1997; Kolbe, Collins, & Cortese, 1997; Short & Talley, 1997; Taylor, 2000). As a foundational discipline for education, psychology can make important contributions to the design, implementation, and evaluation of efforts to improve student achievement. "The need for the psychology community to embrace education as a priority" (American Psychological Association, 1997, p. 12) was a basic recommendation of an earlier American Psychological Association conference on school reform and an impetus for a more recent conference (American Psychological Association, 2001).

Making kindergarten to 12th-grade (K-12) education an important focus of research and practice is particularly apt for counseling psychology. The location of many counseling psychology programs in schools of education and the field's early history in public schools render collaboration with the various K-12 professions a natural fit. Engagement with K-12 schools becomes particularly relevant when one considers counseling psychology's commitment to a developmental orientation. Developmental theory not only

informs counseling psychology but also serves to ground most educational research and practice. This shared conceptual framework provides a foundation for collaboration between counseling psychologists and educators (Bernstein, Forrest, & Golston, 1994; Gysbers, 1997; Sprinthall, 1990). Although limited in number, it is not surprising that the school-based programs that have already been successfully designed by counseling psychologists were informed by a developmental framework (e.g., Danish, D'Augelli, & Ginsberg, 1984; Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Mosher, 1979; Rest, 1986; Sprinthall & Scott, 1989; Super & Nevill, 1984). Despite the usefulness of a developmental framework, we believe that any further expansion of collaborative efforts will require new interpretations and extensions of traditional developmental theory.

In this article, we will briefly examine counseling psychology's developmental orientation. We will describe the major tenets of a recent reformulation of developmental theory—developmental-contextualism—and illustrate how this approach provides a rich conceptual framework for counseling psychologists' research and practice in K-12 education. Finally, we will offer an innovative research-based, developmental intervention program that should be of interest to counseling psychologists working with schools.

INTERSECTION BETWEEN DEVELOPMENTAL AND COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

From counseling psychology's beginnings, developmental theory has been viewed as naturally aligned with our central role and function, that is, "to foster the psychological development of the individual" (Tyler, 1961, p. 17). In the 1960s and 1970s, the field established a definitional core around developmental issues, focusing on strengths and psychoeducational interventions (Heppner, Casas, Carter, & Stone, 2000). Within the past two decades, however, a number of counseling psychologists (e.g., Gelso & Fassinger, 1992; Ivey & Goncalves, 1988; Sprinthall, 1990) have argued that we have never fully realized the potential of the developmental orientation with respect to psychotherapy.

Despite the inherent links between counseling psychology and . . . developmental psychology and in spite of the fact that counselors use theoretical concepts about . . . development when working with clients (implicitly and informally if not explicitly and formally), we contend that counseling psychology has not made full or sufficient use of . . . developmental psychology in theory, research, and practice. (Gelso & Fassinger, 1992, p. 278)

Counseling psychology's failure to make optimal use of developmental psychology is evident when one examines counseling psychology's typical interpretation of development and developmental psychology's traditional explanations of the developmental process. For many counseling psychologists, development is defined rather narrowly and primarily implies "growth over the course of the lifespan" (Gelso & Fassinger, 1992). This interpretation prevails in both counseling research (Blustein, Prezioso, & Schultheiss, 1995; Helms, 1990; Kenny & Rice, 1995; Lopez, 1995; Super, 1953, 1990; Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996; Wagner, 1994) and practice (Gysbers, 1997; Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Hansen & Gysbers, 1975), with rare exceptions (Ivey, 1986).

Confining development to "growth across the life span" has two significant limitations. First, this interpretation does not specify the mechanisms of developmental change. Unlike individual theories of development (e.g., Erikson, 1950; Kohlberg, 1984; Piaget, 1970), this more general interpretation does not lead to an articulation of growth patterns evident in organizational structures or stages that might form the basis for intervention. This lack of specificity renders the growth across the life span perspective difficult to apply to clinical practice and results in describing the counseling process in only a very general way (i.e., helping children and adults "to be successful along the way" of their lives) (Borders, 1994). "When developmental theory is considered [by counseling psychologists], it is from the outcomes-based lifespan perspective, and thus, clinical interventions tend to remain separated from developmental theory" (Ivey & Goncalves, 1988, p. 406).

The second limitation of a growth across the life span interpretation of development is its tendency to emphasize all change as growth, implying that change leads only to positive outcomes. Within such a perspective, interventions that focused on problems, deficits, or illness were construed as "not representative of a developmental approach" (Borders, 1994). Although a strong emphasis on strengths has certainly helped psychology to counter a long-standing preoccupation with deficits, the counseling process literature makes it clear that balanced clinical work requires simultaneous attention to positive and negative outcomes, that is, attention to strengths and deficits. An interpretation of development that considers only a single outcome would not be as likely to lead to effective interventions. In sum, a growth across the life span interpretation of development is too general to lead to specific interventions and too one-sided to result in balanced practice.

Traditional developmental psychology theories (e.g., Erikson, 1950; Freud, 1949; Piaget, 1970) have also suffered from some important limitations that have made the theories difficult for counseling psychologists to apply in practice. First, developmental psychology's overemphasis on pathology stands in sharp contrast to counseling psychology's emphasis on

strengths. For this reason, psychoanalytic theories of development were never widely utilized by counseling psychologists. Second, the focus of most traditional developmental theorists on childhood (0 to 18 years) did not align itself with counseling psychology's interest in adults. Finally, developmental psychology's preoccupation with the universals that account for similarities across individuals was not aligned with counseling psychology's emphasis on context, that is, the particulars that explain individual differences. Context has been a critical variable for counseling psychology in accounting for human diversity (Heppner et al., 2000; Rude, Weissberg, & Gazda, 1988). It should be noted that although many traditional developmental theorists overtly articulated the importance of contextual factors (e.g., Erikson), their measures of development (i.e., sequence of stages) did not allow for the effects of context to be demonstrated in outcomes.

Although contributions by classical developmental theories should neither be overlooked nor denied, the complexity of today's world requires an equally complex, multifaceted, and flexible developmental theory. In recent years, these earlier theories have been modified (e.g., Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Lerner, 1986) and have enriched our understanding of the intricate nature of human development. These modifications, along with the major principles of earlier theories, have been incorporated into a meta-theory of development. Recently, this more comprehensive theoretical approach was implicitly recognized by Gysbers (1997) and also by Gelso and Fassinger (1992), who characterized development not only as life span and growth oriented but also as multidimensional (bio-psycho-social), multidirectional (addressing growth and decline), contextual (accounting for diversity), and modifiable.

This expanded and reformulated developmental theory is more useful to and more compatible with the goals of counseling psychology. "Developmental theory is finally taking its deserved and legitimate place as the central formal discipline of counseling and therapy" (Ivey & Goncalves, 1988, p. 406). As we shall see, contemporary developmental theory will be particularly useful to counseling psychologists as they reengage K-12 schools (Bernstein et al., 1994).

DEVELOPMENTAL-CONTEXTUALISM: A NEW DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK

Developmental-contextualism is a meta-theory that provides a broad framework within which earlier developmental theories can be located and examined (Lerner, 1984, 1986, 1995; Lerner, Walsh, & Howard, 1998). Developmental-contextualism (Lerner et al., 1998) is consistent with the dominant emphases of counseling psychology with respect to diverse client

settings, strength promotion, and holistic development in clients of all ages. As a broad, comprehensive framework, it addresses many of the limitations of the earlier developmental theories, including their overemphasis on the person side of the person-environment relationship, their examination of individual processes of development in isolation from one another, their intensive focus on childhood, and their overriding concern with psychopathology.

Both the earlier theories and developmental-contextualism focus on the person in the person-environment relationship by articulating the universal aspects of development, that is, the ways in which people are similar to one another (e.g., Piaget's universal stages of cognitive development) (Rutter, 1996). However, developmental-contextualism, by also considering the contextual aspects of the person-environment relationship, goes beyond universalism to consider the ways in which people differ. Within this newer perspective, a developing person not only affects his or her contexts, but the context also affects the person's course of development. Thus, both the person and aspects of the context are active agents of change leading to a variety of developmental outcomes (i.e., individual differences).

The two-way interaction between the person and his or her multiple contexts minimizes the nature-nurture divide so prominent in earlier developmental theories. Instead, it maintains that development is inextricably embedded in family, neighborhood, school, community, society, and culture and cannot be considered in isolation from these contexts. The variability in development that results from the effect of context gives rise to plasticity—that is, the potential to modify development in new directions during the life span. In contrast to earlier developmental theories, the concept of plasticity allows developmental-contextualism to account for the resiliency in development and not just the risk that leads to negative outcomes.

Contrary to earlier theorists' exclusive focus on psychological development, developmental-contextualism is holistic. It embraces the development of the total person—the biological, psychological, social, and cultural aspects. These various organizational levels not only develop at the same time, but they also continually and reciprocally interact with and change one another. Thus, the parts of the person do not function in isolation from the whole. Consequently, it is necessary to consider any single aspect of development (e.g., cognitive development) within the framework of the whole person (emotional, biological, and social processes). The continual interaction of these parts within the whole helps to explain the complexity of human development.

Most of the earlier developmental theories provided rich descriptions of the development of children from birth to age 18. However, few theorists

addressed adult development. Although chronological age is typically correlated with development, development is not bounded by chronological age because immature development can characterize adults as well as children. Developmental-contextualism provides a broader framework for understanding development across the life span.

Earlier theories provided rich descriptions of outcomes, that is, the various stages of development that individuals are capable of achieving (e.g., Erikson's eight stages). Although these early theorists provided a description of the developmental tasks mastered at each stage, they provided limited accounts of how individuals move from one stage to the next. Developmental-contextualism, on the other hand, focuses less on the mastery of tasks and more on how these developmental goals are reached. Understanding the way change occurs over the course of development will help psychologists to design and implement effective practices for prevention and intervention for people at all developmental levels.

To illustrate better the utility of developmental-contextualism for counseling psychologists who work with schools, we have identified four of its major principles. Human development (a) is affected by context, (b) involves bio-psycho-social levels, (c) occurs during the life span, and (d) incorporates strengths and deficits. The following sections will delineate each of these four principles and provide examples of their relation to developmentally informed, school-based intervention strategies.

Context Affects Development

Recently, the relational view of context and development has had a significant effect on K-12 education. Contemporary best practices in education assume that knowledge is not imparted to the child independent of environment but rather is coconstructed by the child within a social context (Airasian & Walsh, 1997). Educators now recognize that community resources and familial supports are not simply ancillary but critical to academic success (Dryfoos, 1994; Paavola et al., 1995; Schorr, 1997). The critical role of family, school, and community contexts in academic development suggests that psychologists cannot limit interventions to the individual level but must also intervene in the systems that affect children. Implementing systemic interventions that cross family, school, and community boundaries is a fundamental challenge for school and community-based counselors who work with children. During the past 30 years, school counselors have played a key role in implementing systemic interventions. As a result of the comprehensive guidance and counseling program movement that began in the 1970s, school counselors have assumed major responsibility for developing pro-

grams that address parental involvement, violence prevention, adolescent depression, suicide, and the enhancement of social competence (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000).

Counseling psychologists who work in community and university settings can extend the work of school counselors by partnering with local schools and providing specialized mental health services, program design, grant writing, and program evaluation services. For example, a faculty member in the University of Tennessee Counseling Program helped to spearhead a school-community-university partnership that transformed a traditional large urban public school into one that provides a range of services to children and families (Kronick, 2000).

Counseling psychologists' roles need not be limited to the regular school day. After-school programs are becoming a centerpiece of the efforts to link school and community resources (Schorr, 1997). As community agencies (e.g., local mental health centers, Young Men's Christian Associations [YMCAs], United Way programs) increasingly cosponsor after-school programs with schools, counseling psychologists can play a key role in developing programmatic interventions that support academic and social development and that span the school and after-school boundaries. Government and foundation grants are providing increased funding for these types of interventions. These funds, along with third-party payments for direct services, can provide some support for the involvement of counseling psychologists.

Counseling psychology's unique history of working across a variety of contexts and cultures can significantly facilitate reengagement with K-12 education and facilitate effective entrance into the complex organizational and social systems that characterize today's schools. Whether the school or the outside agency initiates the contact, the differences between the two institutional cultures must be taken into account. Professionals in collaborating systems must come not only to understand each other's culture but to appreciate each other's perspective and potential contributions. Counseling psychologists' skills and knowledge base in bridging cultural differences can facilitate these relationships. It is important to note that our experience in implementing analogous programs on college campuses will be a distinct asset in extending this work to K-12 schools. In higher education, we typically work across academic (classroom), social (dormitory), family, and cultural contexts as we deliver intervention and prevention services. The design, implementation, and evaluation of intervention and prevention programs is a core aspect of the college counselor's role and has many parallels in K-12 education.

Finally, counseling psychologists can bring our multicultural expertise to assist in creating school climates and interventions that are not only respon-

sive to the diverse needs of families but also promote positive racial, cultural, and ethnic identities among children (Helms, 1990; Vargas & Koss-Chioino, 1992). Counseling psychologists can collaborate with school-based professionals to take into account the diversity of the child-context interactions that shape developmental outcomes for all students. The mutual interaction in schools between various cultural/ethnic groups and the dominant culture changes everyone to some degree. Immigrant children of different culture and ethnic groups are profoundly affected by new surroundings and undergo a process of acculturation. However, acculturation is a bilateral process and immigrant groups contribute substantial aspects of their own culture to the dominant culture (Atkinson & Thompson, 1992). Creating climates that support diversity is a critical issue for a school, an institution that is organized around the value system of dominant culture (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Moreover, external funding is increasingly available to underwrite the development of programmatic interventions to promote a inclusive school climate.

In short, grounded in the relational nature of development and context, counseling psychologists can gain an understanding of the complex structure of school systems; work systemically across school and community boundaries; collaborate in the design, implementation, and evaluation of prevention and intervention programs in school settings; and apply their expertise in multicultural domains.

Bio-Psycho-Social Development

Educators know that the goal of increasing academic achievement cannot be realized if children suffer from ill health and live and learn in unsafe environments (Learning First Alliance, 2001; Stallings, 1995). However, this awareness of the interdependence of the various levels of development (biological, psychological, and sociocultural) has not always prevailed in schools. The belief that these developmental levels could be addressed in an isolated manner has been particularly evident in the way that services to children have been organized. Traditional service delivery has often focused on a single aspect of development to the exclusion of others. For example, education has focused primarily on cognitive development, whereas socioemotional development, on the other hand, was left to psychologists, and biological concerns to the medical profession. The complex issues facing today's children, however, can rarely be neatly divided into such discipline-shaped boxes. Although focused professional expertise is clearly valuable, the lack of interprofessional collaboration has resulted in uncoordinated, fragmented, and disjointed service delivery (Brabeck, Walsh,

Kenny, & Comilang, 1997; Lerner, 1995; Schorr, 1988; Walsh, Brabeck, & Howard, 1999). Parents and professionals are now calling for a more integrated approach for children and families.

A holistic approach to children's services is an important corollary to developmental-contextualism (Lerner, 1995). An event that occurs at one level (biological, psychological, or social) of experience affects and is affected by the conditions at other levels (Lerner, 1984). The mutual interdependence of various aspects of development strongly suggests the need for a comprehensive approach to prevention and intervention with children and families. This need is particularly evident in schools because academic development is influenced by innumerable interacting personal and environmental factors, including general abilities, motivational dispositions, affective states, and social skills (Arbona, 2000).

The importance of approaches that integrate bio-psycho-social levels is supported by wide-ranging research. Studies grounded in a developmental-contextualist perspective have clearly shown that effective intervention and prevention with school-aged children require coordinated, comprehensive approaches that target a wide range of behavior and take into account the complexity of human development (Dryfoos, 1994; Lerner, 1995; Marx, Wooley, & Northup, 1998; Schorr, 1997).

The effectiveness of coordinated, comprehensive systems of care has led a number of schools to develop new models for integrating the academic and nonacademic domains of development. In contrast to the traditional school model, which responds in a limited manner to one or two nonacademic needs of children (e.g., providing counseling or nursing services), these new approaches address a wider range of issues in a coordinated way (Coltoff, 1998; Kenny, Waldo, Warter, & Barton, 2002 [this issue]; Paavola et al., 1995; Walsh et al., 2000). A critical element of these coordinated approaches involves collaboration by the varied professionals to coordinate service delivery and follow-up to ensure that problems are successfully addressed (Dryfoos, 1995). Counseling psychologists working in community settings can be positive assets to school-based teams that are building these new models that integrate health, social, psychological, and educational service delivery for children and their families.

Interprofessional collaboration in school-community partnerships provides counseling psychologists with new opportunities for practice, research, and policy development (Brabeck et al., 1997). Counseling psychology's appreciation of differences across institutional cultures can help us to engage as colearners with school-based staff members as well as service providers from other fields such as health, law, and social work. Whereas collaboration can raise "turf issues," counseling psychologists can utilize their training in

group process to facilitate alliances and provide leadership for collaborative efforts with a wide range of professionals.

Interprofessional collaboration and comprehensive service delivery has not only been a growing focus of psychology but also of other professions during the past decade (American Academy of Pediatrics Task Force on Integrated School Services, 1994; American Association for Counseling and Development, American School Counselor Association, National Association of School Psychologists, & National Association of Social Workers, 1990; American Bar Association, 1993; American Psychological Association, 1997; National Association of School Nurses, 1995). The location of the majority of counseling psychology programs in schools of education provides opportunities to collaborate with professionals in teacher education, school counseling, school administration, and educational evaluation. Such collaborations can provide new perspectives and enhance student development and learning (Mooney, Brabeck, Cawthorne, Sparks, & Walsh, 1996).

In short, a developmental-contextualist framework calls for counseling psychologists to recognize that a holistic understanding of a client often requires the input of professionals with expertise in various domains (Brabeck et al., 1997). By collaborating with other professionals, we can contribute to prevention efforts that bolster school-to-work transition, foster multicultural awareness and appreciation, enhance career development, and promote positive mental health in schoolchildren.

Development Across the Life Span

Educators' application of developmental psychology has been limited primarily to children in the 5- to 18-year-old age range. In light of a life span perspective, educators are beginning to see new opportunities to focus on adult issues, including involvement with parents, preparation of students for the world of work, and the promotion of healthy behaviors into adulthood. These areas of interest, in turn, have created opportunities for counseling psychologists whose expertise is with adults.

Traditionally, schools have had little direct interest in parents. Indeed, parents were often engaged on the margins primarily to enlist their support in addressing poor academic performance or in managing behavioral concerns. However, new understandings of development have led educators to realize that the developmental status of the parents has a powerful effect on the child (Lerner, 1984, 1986). Schools are increasingly making efforts to enhance the development of the adults in children's lives. Consequently, they are now beginning to house programs (e.g., health promotion, continuing education, and child-rearing classes) that directly benefit parents. These programs, often

designed and implemented with community agencies, increase parental involvement in schools (e.g., Coltoff, 1998) and educate them about how to promote their children's academic achievement (Walsh, Howard, & Buckley, 1999). Counseling psychologists in community agencies can collaborate with school counselors in implementing programs for parents and school staff members on topics such as child rearing, behavior management, supporting education in the home, stress management, crisis management, interpersonal skills, dealing with divorce, and the effect of chronic illness on children.

A life span approach has also been the impetus for schools to address transitions—particularly the transition from school-to-work. Although many high school graduates transition immediately into college, a large percentage move directly into jobs. The school-to-work transition is a growing area of concern for school districts and a fertile area for counseling psychologists (Solberg, Howard, Blustein, & Close, 2002 [this issue]). Our long standing strength in career development lends itself to a natural alignment with this focus in schools (Howard, 1999). In Boston, for example, the Public Schools' Office of School-to-Work Transition has called on local counseling psychologists to assist in designing, implementing, and evaluating holistic approaches to school-to-work transition programs for high school students (Blustein & McWhirter, 2000; Solberg et al., 2002).

Finally, a life span approach is beginning to shape educators' efforts to affect the lifelong development and well-being of students. Schools are keenly aware of their responsibility to educate students for life by promoting positive life skills and healthy lifestyles. These programs, often under the umbrella of health education, cover physical health, mental health, and social development (Marx et al., 1998). In the past, educators have sometimes assumed that these issues could be taught in a one-shot manner, for example, offering HIV education in one or a few instructional sessions (Marx et al., 1998). Educators now realize that to have a lasting effect these knowledge areas need to be embedded in a comprehensive approach that is consistent with the developmental level of the child and the family (Marx et al., 1998). Kenny et al. (2002) pointed to the critical role of developmental level in the design and implementation of prevention programs.

Utilizing the developmental-contextualism framework, counseling psychologists can be of assistance to districts or schools in selecting health education curricula that are sequentially organized, developmentally appropriate, and empirically supported. We can help provide staff training to deliver new health education programs, particularly in areas such as anger management, interpersonal skills development, and child abuse prevention. In addition, our research skills can be instrumental in designing and conducting

methodologically sound evaluation studies of the effectiveness of those programs.

Risk and Resiliency

During the past decades, education has debated whether intervention strategies should focus on promoting strengths or remediating deficits. In today's political climate, the pressure to improve test scores has forced schools to concentrate their resources on students who fail. A focus on deficits in the academic domain is paralleled in the socioemotional realm as schools confront a range of personal-social issues (e.g., substance abuse, teen pregnancy, suicide, etc.). This one-sided approach to improving educational and psychosocial outcomes runs contrary to contemporary developmental theory. The latter views the course of human development as a trajectory that can be modified at any point and can lead to new patterns of risk and resilience as well as corresponding sets of strengths and deficits. Recent research on effective programs for schoolchildren and youth makes clear that a focus on competence enhancement as well as problem reduction is essential for treatment success (Lerner, 1995; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). A combined focus on both risk and resilience has implications in three areas of concern to schools: the design and implementation of evidence-based prevention and intervention programs, the incorporation of social development programs into the academic goals of schools, and the improvement of academic outcomes for diverse populations. These issues, in turn, present opportunities for counseling psychologists to incorporate developmental-contextualism's approach to risk and resilience in their work.

Recent developments in the theory and research on resiliency and related concepts offer empirical evidence that can contribute to the design and evaluation of school-based prevention and intervention programs that can be utilized in school settings (Benard, 1991; Garmezy, Masten, & Tellegen, 1984; Henderson & Milstein, 1996; Rutter, 1985; Werner & Smith, 1992). In their collaboration with schools, counseling psychologists can translate the research on resiliency—that is, “the capacity to spring back, rebound, successfully adapt in the face of adversity” (Henderson & Milstein, 1996, p. 7)—into the design and evaluation of intervention and prevention efforts. For example, the research of Werner and Smith (1992) identified key protective factors and processes that are associated with moderating the effect of severe developmental risks. More recently, Werner's research on resilience in children at risk has been expanded to include the strengths that help all children to function competently in their day-to-day lives. For example, Masten and Coatsworth (1998) identified factors that contribute to children's compe-

tence: (a) relationships with parents and other caring adults; (b) the ability to self-regulate attention, emotion, and behavior; (c) connections to prosocial community organizations; and (d) authoritative parenting with warmth, structure, and high expectations. Relying on these research findings, counseling psychologists can assist school staff members to design programs that incorporate protective factors and promote competence. Examples include mentoring programs that foster productive adult-child relationships, implementation of social competence curricula, and after-school programming.

The design and implementation of programs to promote resilience and social competence should go beyond individual sources of resilience to include sources of resilience within the community. Recent research has helped to identify some of these resources. For example, across the country, the design of school-community collaborations has been significantly facilitated by the research of Benson and his associates at the Search Institute (Benson, 1997; Benson, Galbraith, & Espeland, 1998). These researchers have identified 40 developmental assets that promote positive youth development, including 20 assets that are internal within the child (e.g., commitment to learning, social competencies, positive identity) and 20 external assets that are within the environment (e.g., support activities, empowerment of youth, clear boundaries and expectations, and community opportunities for constructive uses of youth's time). By assisting school counselors to design programs that address sources of strength within the individual and community, counseling psychologists render basic research useful in educational settings.

Evaluation of the outcomes of prevention and intervention programs is increasingly required by policy makers and funders. Knowledge of the theory and research in risk and resilience can help counseling psychologists to design meaningful and appropriate program evaluations at the level of process and outcome. The complicated nature of human development and the continuing interplay between risk and resilience suggests that evaluations cannot be limited to simple pretest and posttest analyses on one or two variables. Rather, program evaluations must involve complex assessments of multiple interacting variables leading to both intermediate and long-term outcomes. Counseling psychologists can adapt their traditional research skills to newly emerging methodologies in the field of program evaluation (Stufflebeam, Madaus, & Kellaghan, 2000).

Counseling psychologists' understanding of the theory and research related to risk and resilience can be useful to school staff members in incorporating prevention and intervention programs into an educational environment. The inclusion of social development programs often poses a challenge to schools because of their limited resources, time constraints, and the demand for immediate outcomes. Limited financial resources have often led

to the marginalization of these strength promotion programs. Framing these programs against the backdrop of relevant research and theory can help administrators to understand their essential connection to academic achievement. For example, counseling psychologists can help academic administrators to understand how and why violence prevention programs are critically important to raising test scores. Additionally, because social development programs are often added onto the curricula, teachers feel pressured to accomplish a multitude of seemingly diverse agendas within the time-limited school day. Counseling psychologists can help to integrate social and developmental goals into a school's already established curriculum. For example, there are many social competence curricula that are integrated into literacy curricula. During time, counseling psychologists can gradually foster an understanding that development is a complicated and complex process and thereby help administrators, parents, and teachers not to demand instant academic improvement on the basis of any single program.

Finally, schools are challenged to explain and address the different levels of academic achievement across diverse ethnic groups. One of the earliest explanations and, arguably, the most damaging for individuals from minority groups, as well as for educational institutions, was the notion that the difference in academic success could be explained, in large part, by inherent qualities (Willoughby, 1927). Given the discrediting of this hypothesis soon after its introduction into the literature, the focus shifted to an analysis of the cultural assets and deficits of various ethnic groups. For a number of years the belief that certain cultures were more equipped to encourage academic achievement because of their cultural practices and beliefs was generally accepted (Peretti & Austin, 1980; Sinha, 1978). Although the cultural deficit model has since been replaced by more complex understandings that include an examination of larger sociocultural context, earlier theories unfortunately continue to influence the attitude and practice in some educational quarters. Counseling psychologists in schools can utilize their knowledge of risk and resilience and their expertise in multicultural domains to challenge deficit explanations of the achievement gap. This understanding will particularly support comprehensive guidance programs that propose to build on strengths as well as to address deficits.

In summary, the four principles of developmental-contextualism provide excellent guidelines for interventions in school and community settings. These principles point to the need for interventions that involve a range of contexts and multiple levels of development, affect people across the life span, and address both strengths and deficits. They also suggest that interventions can occur at a variety of levels including the community, the classroom, and the individual student and family. Following is a description of a community-wide intervention, the Communities That Care (CTC) model of

Hawkins and colleagues (Pollard, Hawkins, & Arthur, 1999). It is offered as a pioneering approach that could be useful to counseling psychologists in their work in K-12 education. Although this particular example is grounded in a more specific theory (i.e., social development), it reflects the principles of the larger framework of developmental-contextualism.

DEVELOPMENTAL-CONTEXTUALISM IN ACTION: AN EXAMPLE OF A SYSTEMIC INTERVENTION

Introduction

CTC is a comprehensive prevention approach (Catalano & Hawkins, 1996; Hawkins, Catalano, & Associates, 1992; Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992; Pollard et al., 1999; Wong, Burgoyne, Catalano, Chappell, & Hawkins, 1997) to build a community of care around youth. Its overall goal is to foster positive youth development by mobilizing the resources of the community, school, and family. Although CTC includes some elements that are quite familiar to counseling psychologists, it goes beyond our traditional focus on the individual and small group. CTC recognizes the need to promote change in the school, family, and community contexts by simultaneously reducing risk and enhancing protective factors at a systemic level.

Target Recipients

Although the focus of the program is children and youth in the community, the intervention involves the participation of significant adults in the community. CTC has been in use for more than 10 years, has been implemented in more than 600 communities, and incorporates systematic evaluation procedures. This preventative intervention approach focuses on addressing needs within entire communities. It has been effectively implemented in urban, suburban, and rural regions in the United States.

Goals and Program Content

The CTC model has both theory and research-driven implications for prevention and intervention. It calls users' attention to (a) identifying risks, (b) early intervention, (c) addressing risk factors at appropriate developmental stages, (d) targeting high-risk individuals and communities, (e) addressing multiple risks with multiple strategies that promote strengths and reduce risks, and (f) employing strategies appropriate to racial, cultural, and economic diversity.

CTC offers communities a structured process that identifies and promotes protective factors while reducing risk factors. Central to this structured process is the CTC Youth Survey (Catalano & Hawkins, 1996). The survey, which is administered to students in Grades 6 through 12, assesses risk factors, protective factors, and problem behaviors as identified by social development theory and research. It yields a graphic representation, or three-dimensional map/profile, of the distribution of these factors and behaviors in the surveyed area (e.g., school). Based on these results, a school or community is able to identify where its students exhibit elevated risk, as well as to determine the pattern of protective factors and processes. The content of a specific intervention for a specific community will depend on the needs identified in the assessment and the community profile.

The obtained profile can be matched with more than 100 prevention strategies or programs shown to be effective in reducing known risk factors and enhancing protective factors (Posey et al., 1996). The criteria that were used to identify research-based effective strategies involved studies employing random assignment or equivalent comparison groups, no serious methodological flaws, and demonstrated behavioral outcomes (Hawkins, 2000). Regarding these effective programs, 88% included a school component, 58% a family component, and 33% a community component (Hawkins, 2000). In addition, the programs that effectively changed behavior lasted at least 9 months (80%), employed a structured curriculum or program of activities (66%), increased positive behaviors (50%), and reduced problem behaviors (92%).

The strategies recommended by CTC are organized into the four areas of family, school, community-based youth programs, and community-focused programs and into six age ranges: from prenatal to young adult (age 18). For each strategy, Posey et al. (1996) listed the specific risk and protective factors targeted. This specificity enables CTC users to (a) select effective developmentally appropriate strategies, (b) target the needed prevention/intervention foci (e.g., school, etc.), and (c) match their prevention/intervention efforts against the risk identified by the survey for their locality.

Theory-Practice Link

The connection between theory and practice in the CTC program is most easily seen in the methodology employed to build a community of care around youth. A fundamental theoretical premise that drives practice in CTC is that the likelihood of healthy, positive behaviors is related to the extent to which youth are immersed in environments and communities that consistently communicate healthy beliefs and clear standards for behavior. The

context in which a young person develops is viewed as critical to healthy development and is the focus of the intervention.

CTC also assumes that healthy beliefs and clear behavioral standards—provided by families, schools, and communities and through bonding (attachment and commitment to those families, etc.) and specific individual characteristics (gender, a resilient temperament, sociability, and intelligence)—constitute protective factors. These protective factors reduce the effect of risk and/or increase the probability of healthy behaviors and positive youth development. The recognition of the role of risk and resilience as well as the role of bio-psycho-social domains reflects the fundamental assumptions of developmental-contextualism regarding the wholism and plasticity evident in human development.

CTC is grounded in a life span perspective insofar as it assumes that interventions not only provide an immediate benefit to young people but also serve to guide development throughout the course of their lives. CTC recognizes that for interventions to be effective, young people need opportunities to contribute to their community and other contexts in positive ways. To take advantage of these opportunities, they must first develop necessary social and cognitive skills. These skills are ones that historically have been stressed by counseling psychologists as beneficial to development during the life span. They include emotional (identifying, managing, and expressing feelings; controlling impulses; delaying gratification; and reducing stress), cognitive (self-talk, reading and interpreting social cues, problem solving and decision making, self-awareness, taking the perspective of others, and having a positive attitude), and behavioral skills (nonverbal communication, verbal communications such as assertiveness, and taking action). Young people also need to recognize situations that afford them the opportunity to use these skills to contribute in prosocial ways immediately and in the long term.

Interprofessional Collaboration

Because the needs of individual communities are varied, the types of professionals delivering the service interventions will also be varied. Teams that are composed of service providers from across professions are established within a community to oversee the intervention process. These service providers will work together to help reduce the identified risks and strengthen the resources of the community.

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Child Health and Human Development, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Evaluation

Evaluation has focused on two issues: Does CTC improve the quality of community planning and decision making for positive youth development and prevention of the problem behaviors, and does it positively affect indicators of the risk and protective factors associated with these behaviors (Developmental Research and Programs, 2000)? Data about effectiveness have been collected by local communities as well as by the state and federal agencies that have supported CTC. Harachi, Ayers, Hawkins, Catalano, and Cushing (1996), for example, reported that CTC improves the quality of community planning and decision making for positive youth development. Other evidence of its effects on community planning reported by the OJJDP has included a reduction in duplication of services, increased leveraging of resources for prevention programming, and increased use of research-based promising approaches that have demonstrated effectiveness (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1996). With respect to effects on risk and protective factors, some local data have shown positive trends such as increased achievement and commitment to school and decreased tardiness, school discipline notices, juvenile crime, and vandalism for some communities (Hawkins, 2000; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1997). Currently, CTC is being tested in a 5-year experimental study in 42 communities in seven states that is funded by a number of agencies, including the U.S. Department of Education, and in a three-site pilot implementation in the United Kingdom (Developmental Research and Programs, 2000).

CONCLUSION

Developmental-contextualism provides a useful conceptual framework for counseling psychologists who choose to work in schools. These frameworks are naturally aligned with the orientation of counseling psychology as well as the goals and processes of education. An example of this alignment is evident in the ways in which the profession's expertise in career development has long informed the career development curriculum for school-aged children as well as the school-to-work transition movement (Blustein, Phillips, Jobin-Davis, Finkelberg, & Roarke, 1997; Worthington & Juntunen, 1997). The profession's understanding of contextual influences on development

enables it to coordinate culturally appropriate interventions across school, family, and community. Developmental-contextualism can lead counseling psychologists to move beyond individual change and promote systemic change—in neighborhood, school, and community. Counseling psychology's sensitivity to and knowledge of the holistic character of development ensures that it will promote an integrated perspective of the relationship between academic, social, emotional, and physical development. The profession's life span orientation positions it to support the development of school children and adolescents as well as their parents. Finally, counseling psychology's focus on strengths provides a rich conceptual and empirical basis for developing balanced approaches to prevention and intervention in school settings.

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