



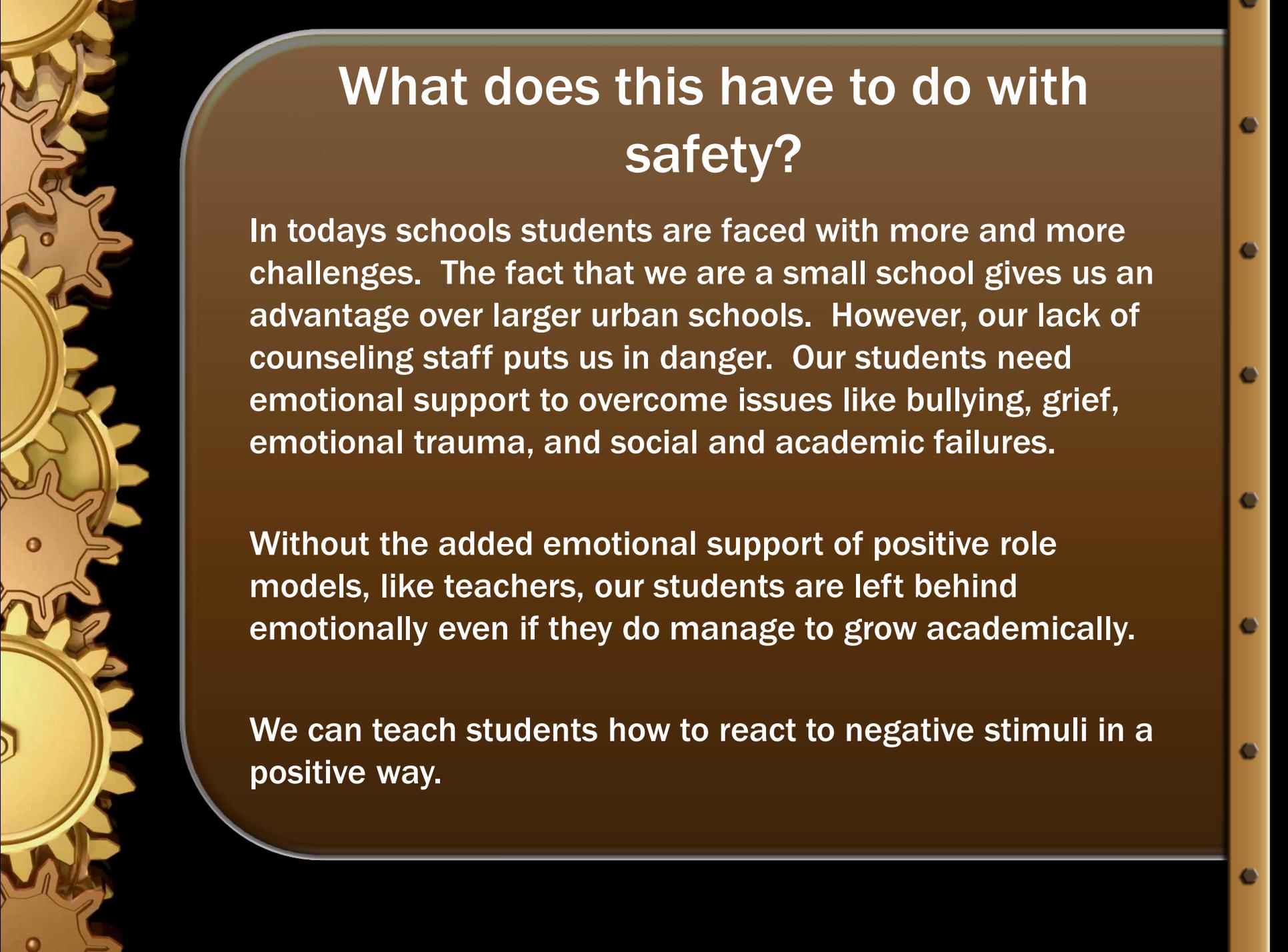
The Alternative to School Counselors

Travis Washmon

Our Biggest Safety Concern: The Lack of a Guidance Counselor

- Recognizing at risk students
- Providing grief counseling
- Providing emotional support
- Making transitions from school to school or grade to grade as smooth as possible
- Academic advising for continued growth





What does this have to do with safety?

In today's schools students are faced with more and more challenges. The fact that we are a small school gives us an advantage over larger urban schools. However, our lack of counseling staff puts us in danger. Our students need emotional support to overcome issues like bullying, grief, emotional trauma, and social and academic failures.

Without the added emotional support of positive role models, like teachers, our students are left behind emotionally even if they do manage to grow academically.

We can teach students how to react to negative stimuli in a positive way.

Why do we need counselors?

“A research study of Florida students in 5th through 9th grades found that students in schools with a comprehensive guidance program scored significantly better on state’s standardized test for reading and math.”

-American Counseling Association



What is the solution?

Implement a program in which teachers directly advise students on personal, academic, and social issues by adding emotional support.



Overview of Program

Teachers will work with students on several different aspects of life in addition to academic advising .

Each teacher will be assigned a certain number of students to “mentor.” Our role will be considered that of counselor and therefore we will be held to the code of conduct that all counselors are held to.

We will guide students through adolescence by talking to and most importantly listening to them in the manner which is most comfortable for them.

Creating connections

- We will build trust through listening and sharing exercises

Intervention

- We can intervene on behalf of the student if the situation calls for it. Protecting our students from themselves, other students, and if necessary, parents should be our priority.

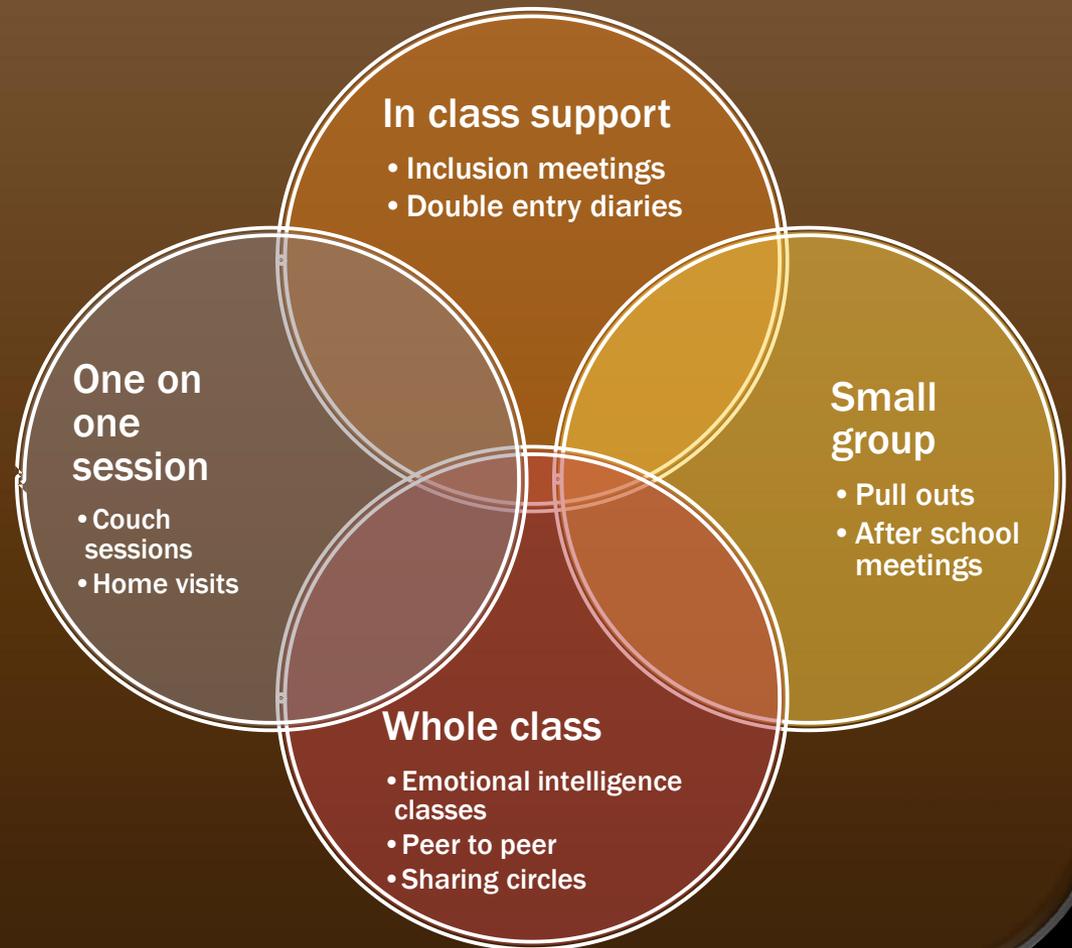
Prevention

- Emotional and social skill building exercises will prepare our students for future problems and will make them capable of coping with loss, failure, or even success in positive ways. They will also be capable of passing these skills on to others.



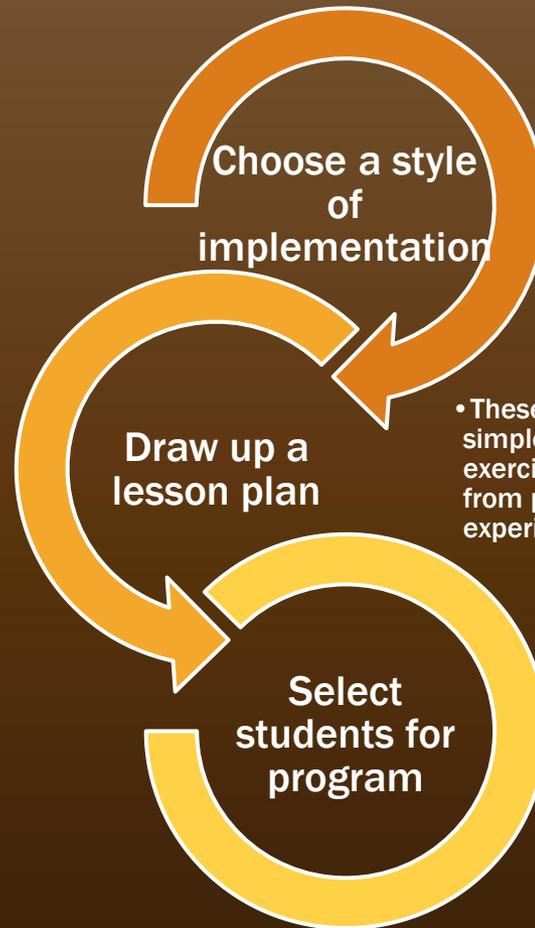
How will we implement the program?

There are four main ways in which we can implement a teacher lead advising program as an alternative to hiring counselors.



What do teachers do?

Research has shown that teachers are best at providing emotional support when they draw from their own life experiences (Phillippo 2010). However, some teachers feel more comfortable with extra training. For those there is Region XI training on a monthly basis.



- Resources for this can be found [here](#).

- These can be as simple as listening exercises, or stories from personal experience.

- Each teacher should nominate one student based on observations in class.



What does this cost and what does it look like?

Valid questions.

It looks like teachers going above and beyond teaching academic subjects. Students grow mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually/morally. Students will partake in emotional learning classes as regularly as they do P.E.

Increasing a teacher's supply stipend would make the program more effective, but is not wholly necessary.

As an alternative to hiring counselors (Avg. Salary=\$53,380 according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor) this program will cost very little.

For training and materials the estimated school-wide cost would be in the area of \$2500. That takes into consideration that each teacher would like to attend the Region XI training for counselors.

Training: \$45 per teacher
Books and other materials: \$75 per teacher
Training our students to handle whatever life throws at them: \$Priceless



References

Phillippo, K. L. (2010). Teachers Providing Social and Emotional Support: A Study of Advisor Role Enactment in Small High Schools. *Teachers College Record*, 112(8), 2258-2293.

Pizzolato, J. (2008). Advisor, teacher, partner: Using the learning partnerships model to reshape academic advising. *About Campus*, 13(1), 18-25.

Osborne, Chad. (2008) Emotional Intelligence Resource Site: <http://ozpk.tripod.com/01multi>

<http://www.counseling.org/PublicPolicy/TP/ResourcesforSchoolCounselors/CT2.aspx>

www.naesp.org/resources/2/Principal/2007/M-Ap50.pdf

