

Preventing and Intervening in Student Mental Health Concerns

A students' mental health can either facilitate or become a significant barrier to academic, personal/social, and career development and may also compromise school safety. Through the implementation of the Kansas Comprehensive School Counseling Program, professional school counselors at all levels in Kansas make a significant, vital and indispensable contribution toward the mental health and wellness of all students. Professional school counselors are knowledgeable and skilled in working with students who are struggling with developmental or mental health issues, and work to meet the personal/social, academic, and career developmental needs of all students spanning the continuum of care. *The Kansas School Counselor Association (KSCA) believes professional school counselors are uniquely qualified to provide education, prevention, short-term counseling interventions adapted to the school setting, and referral services that promote positive mental health and remove barriers to student success.*

In Kansas, professional school counselors:

- Deliver the school counseling curriculum (KS BOE) to promote positive mental and behavioral health.
- Provide responsive services including short-term counseling or crisis intervention focused on mental health or situational concerns with the intent of identifying and removing barriers to learning and helping the student return to the classroom to receive instruction.
- Work within ethical standards and privacy laws to educate teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, and community stakeholders about the mental health concerns of students, including recognition of the role environmental and systemic factors have in causing or exacerbating mental health issues.
- Advocate and collaborate with school and community stakeholders to ensure that students and their families have access to mental health services beyond the scope of the program and through appropriate referral as may be needed.