Assignment #4: Group Session Report-Girls Empowerment Group

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In today's culture, our teenagers are flooded with messages from the media, family, and peers about who they should be and how they should live. Many of these are harmful and destructive, making it difficult for teenage girls to develop a healthy sense of self-worth, self-respect, and self-purpose. Without a strong sense of self, teenagers are more vulnerable to exploitation and victimization and may find it challenging to make decisions that positively impact their lives.

Our Girl's Empowerment Group aims to counteract these negative messages by speaking about worth and value and giving girls the tools to successfully navigate peer pressure, emotional stress, and low self-esteem. We believe using these tools can substantially undercut delinquency and victimization of girls and empower individuals to live powerful, healthy lives.

Purpose/Goals

The Girl's Empowerment Group's mission is to counteract harmful messages and empower teenage girls with a strong sense of self-worth, self-respect, and self-purpose. Indeed, the media, family, and peer influences can significantly impact teenagers' perceptions of themselves and their decisions, which is why creating a supportive and empowering environment is essential. This program encompasses activities aimed at personal development, skill-building, and group management. To develop young girls' sense of self-worth and identity, which includes their ability to make decisions and plan for the future. Here's a breakdown of the purpose and goals of the components:

- Group pre-assessment: The first session serves as a pre-assessment to understand the needs and requirements of the group members. It helps determine their individual challenges and allows facilitators to tailor future sessions accordingly.
- Empowerment sessions: Several sessions are dedicated to empowerment throughout the school year. These sessions focus on building self-esteem, confidence, and providing tools to overcome obstacles.
- Addressing psychosocial problems: Another aspect of the program revolves around addressing psychosocial problems. These sessions involve discussions and coping strategies for emotional and social challenges.
- Expressive arts: Expressive arts in some sessions help participants explore and express their emotions and thoughts creatively. Activities like art therapy, drama, or music can be incorporated.
- 5. Group management: As the participants work in a group setting, some sessions focus on group dynamics, communication skills, conflict resolution, and team-building exercises.
- Brainstorming activities: These activities encourage creative thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration among group members.
- Video screenings: Watching relevant videos can be an effective way to introduce various concepts, role models, or inspirational stories, contributing to the overall learning experience.
- 8. Interactive activities: Interactive activities encourage active engagement and participation among group members, enhancing their learning and personal growth.

9. Post-assessment: The final session is a post-assessment aimed at evaluating what was learned throughout the program and gathering participant feedback. This helps in understanding the program's effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement in future sessions.

Overall, this program will be well-rounded and designed to promote personal development, emotional well-being, and effective group interactions among the participants. It provides a supportive and enriching environment for the group members to learn, grow, and share their experiences.

The Rationale For The Group

The rationale of the Girl's Empowerment Group is to help teenage girls who are struggling socially, academically, and emotionally because of their lack of knowledge and support from their peers and family. To understand how to help these students in the best possible way, it is essential first to understand the theories behind personality and social development. This understanding helps us to support the students in the following ways:

- Empower youth (students) in the marginalized areas to adopt alternatives to violence or negativity
- Develop the resilience of the youth to be able to deal with difficult life situations
- Raise parents' awareness about the needs of youth and ways of empowering them

Recruitment Phase/ Population Served

While recruiting youth for the Girls Empowerment Group, multiple methods would be used to target participants. We will have teachers, staff, and community support in identifying the youth that fit the criteria of the target group. 60% of the group was recruited via teachers, staff, and the community, while the other 30% were recruited from counselors and office visits. Additionally, the final 10% were recruited through referrals and parents. After the teenage girls were identified, the counselors would send passes to have a direct conversation to inform them about the program to see if they were interested. The final selection is from those most at risk and who fit the criteria.

Implementation Phase/Setting

Over a school year, 16 group sessions are held once a week, one eight-week group session in the fall, and one in the spring, encompassing role-playing, brainstorming activities, video screenings, interactive activities, and group work. The first session is a group pre-assessment to determine members' needs and help inform future sessions. The remaining sessions revolve around empowerment, ways to address psychosocial problems, expressive arts, and group management. The final session is a post-assessment to wrap up what was learned and how to improve future sessions.

These groups are designed to occur once a week for eight weeks, and each session is one hour long. The groups are most effective in small groups, with 6 to 8 individuals (mixed age and grades), giving space for conversation and personal processing. Each session includes teaching, group activities, unique/individual activities, and a discussion. The lessons are for 9th-12th grade girls to develop social and emotional skills by focusing on self-care, self-esteem, self-acceptance, and self-advocacy. The group lessons will be held in the counselor's office or conference room, depending on group size, and the groups will be held after lunch at 1 pm to avoid academic disruption. Together these lessons will promote self-empowerment, confidence, and compassion for positive relationship-building and increased academic achievement. The participants in the sessions, which focus on the following topics:

- Knowing Yourself (Introduction)
- Knowing Your Voice (Self-Advocacy)
- Knowing Your Identity (Self-Confidence)
- Knowing Your Environment (Self-Empowerment)
- Knowing Your Behavior (Self-Care)
- Knowing Your Feelings (Self-Esteem)
- Knowing The Barriers (Self-Compassion)
- Tools For Success (Self-Acceptance)

In addition to the girl's empowerment group sessions, once-a-month sessions are offered to parents who wish to participate and stay informed about the program and their children's progress. Topics of these sessions include ways in which parents can communicate with their children and understand and deal with their needs. For both youth and parents who prefer individual sessions to discuss their cases, they are referred to an outside therapeutic counseling service.

Rules, Roles, and Expectations

The group is here to offer support through difficult times, and safety is paramount.

• Respect and kindness towards others: In a group setting, treating all members with respect and kindness is essential. Each person's experiences and perspectives are valued, and listening attentively when others are speaking is essential. Disagreements may occur,

but they should be handled with sensitivity and understanding. Any form of verbal or physical aggression will not be tolerated.

- Active participation and feedback: To make the most of the group experience, active participation is encouraged. Students will share their thoughts and feelings, and be open to receiving feedback from others. Constructive feedback can help gain new insights and perspectives on individuals' challenges. Expressing honestly and respectfully while offering feedback to others is essential.
- No judgment or assumptions: In the group, members should refrain from making
 judgments or assumptions about others. Each individual's experiences and emotions are
 unique, and it's crucial to approach discussions with an open mind and heart. Avoid
 labeling or categorizing others based on their disclosures.
- Responsible use of technology: If the group incorporates any online platforms or communication tools, it is important to use them responsibly and respectfully. Avoid sharing any private information or group-related content outside of the designated platform. Be mindful of the impact of technology on group dynamics and adhere to guidelines related to virtual interactions.
- Boundaries and self-disclosure: Maintaining appropriate boundaries is essential in a therapeutic group setting. While self-disclosure is encouraged to promote personal growth and connection, sharing at a level comfortable for you is essential. Avoid disclosing intimate details that might make you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- Understanding and accepting the group's purpose: Each group may have specific goals or purposes. It is essential to understand and get the group's purpose, ensuring that the

discussions and activities align with these objectives. If you have concerns about the group's direction or focus, you should share them openly with the co-leaders and other members.

- Commitment to personal growth and change: Participating in a group requires a commitment to personal development and the willingness to explore new behaviors and perspectives. Be open to self-reflection and consider how the group experience can contribute to positive changes in your life.
- Adherence to ethical guidelines: Both group members and co-leaders are expected to adhere to professional, ethical guidelines, ensuring everyone's rights, confidentiality, and well-being are protected throughout the group process.

By understanding and agreeing to these guidelines, group members can foster a safe and supportive environment for personal growth and healing. These guidelines promote respect, confidentiality, empathy, and active engagement, all of which are crucial elements in the success of a therapeutic group experience.

Importance of Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a respected part of counseling and psychology's code of ethics; for anyone to feel comfortable talking about private and revealing information, they need a safe place to talk about anything they want without fear of that information leaving the room. A student's right to privacy and confidentiality is the basis for an effective counseling relationship. Confidentiality ensures that school counselors will not share students' disclosures with others except when the student authorizes it or when there is a clear and present danger to the student and/or others. Each group member in the session will sign a contract/disclosure statement that group counseling is confidential (we will discuss the exceptions that apply) and disclose that what is said in the group stays in the group because the information is personal, private, and confidential.

Identification of Participation, Mindset, and Behavior

The Girls Empowerment Group will foster a growth mindset, self-empowerment, and belief in their abilities. These qualities are essential for personal growth and success in various areas of life. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Mindsets & Behaviors framework is a valuable resource for guiding lesson plans and interventions, ensuring they align with the student's developmental needs and goals. The group's Mindsets & Behaviors action plan outlines how the lessons will be structured and which specific Mindsets & Behaviors will be targeted during the sessions. While the specific Mindsets & Behaviors used in the lesson plans would depend on the group's goals and focus, here are some examples of ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors that are incorporated:

- 1. Mindset: Self-Efficacy/Self-Empowerment Behavior: Students demonstrate confidence in achieving their goals and making positive decisions.
- Mindset: Growth Mindset Behavior: Students embrace challenges, persevere through obstacles, and see effort as a path to mastery.
- Mindset: Positive Attitude Towards Learning Behavior: Students display enthusiasm for learning, engage actively in class, and seek out opportunities to expand their knowledge.
- 4. Mindset: Self-Advocacy Behavior: Students effectively communicate their needs, seek support when necessary, and take responsibility for their own learning.

- Mindset: Resilience Behavior: Students bounce back from setbacks, adapt to changes, and maintain a positive outlook in challenging situations.
- Mindset: Goal Setting and Planning Behavior: Students set realistic and achievable goals, develop action plans, and monitor their progress toward reaching those goals.
- 7. Mindset: Social Skills and Relationship Building Behavior: Students demonstrate effective communication, active listening, and cooperation in group settings.
- 8. Mindset: Emotional Intelligence Behavior: Students recognize and manage their emotions, demonstrate empathy towards others, and handle conflicts constructively.
- Mindset: Decision-Making and Problem-Solving Behavior: Students analyze situations, consider alternatives, and make responsible decisions.
- Mindset: Cultural Competence and Diversity Awareness Behavior: Students respect diverse perspectives, show openness to learning from others, and celebrate differences.

These are just a few examples of the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors that can be used in the Girls' Empowerment Group lesson plans. Each lesson may focus on one or more specific Mindsets & Behaviors, fostering personal growth, emotional intelligence, and self-awareness among the participants. The goal is to create a supportive and empowering environment where the girls can develop the necessary skills and attitudes to succeed academically and in life. Below are the Mindsets & Behaviors used in the lesson plans:

- M 1. Belief in development of the whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being.
- M 2. Sense of acceptance, respect, support and inclusion for self and others in the school environment.

- M 4. Self-confidence in the ability to succeed.
- M 5. Belief in using abilities to their fullest to achieve high-quality results and outcomes.
- B-LS 1. Critical-thinking skills to make informed decisions.
- B-LS 2. Creative approach to learning, tasks and problem solving.
- B-LS 4. Self-motivation and self-direction for learning barriers.
- B-SMS 1. Responsibility for self and actions.
- B-SMS7. Effective coping skills.
- B-SMS 9. Personal safety skills.
- B-SMS 10. Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.
- B-SS 2. Positive, respectful and supportive relationships with students who are similar to and different from them.
- B-SS 8. Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary.
- B-SS 9. Social maturity and behaviors appropriate to the situation and environment.

Leader Training and Goals

Selecting the right person to lead a support group is crucial, as the facilitator plays a significant role in creating a positive and supportive environment for its members. The qualities mentioned for an ideal facilitator are indeed important, and each characteristic contributes to the success of the support group. Let's take a closer look at each quality:

1. Flexible Schedule: A facilitator who can commit to being present for every meeting is essential for consistency and building trust within the group. This ensures that members can rely on the facilitator's presence and support.

- 2. Lots of Energy: A facilitator's positive attitude and good health are valuable in setting the tone for the group. Their enthusiasm and energy can be infectious and inspire members to actively participate and engage in discussions.
- 3. Ability and Experience: Experience in facilitating such groups is valuable, as it equips the facilitator with the necessary skills to guide discussions effectively. Being responsible, articulate, fair, and organized helps create a structured and safe space for members to share and connect.
- 4. Support and Resources: Access to needed resources and support is crucial for the facilitator to fulfill their role effectively. This includes access to communication tools (e.g., phone, car) and having reliable people to assist them when necessary.
- 5. Desire to Help: A facilitator who is genuinely interested in the group's topic or committed to helping others brings a sense of compassion and understanding to the support group. Empathy and relatability can foster stronger connections among members.
- 6. **Personal Affinity:** While it's not a strict requirement, having a facilitator with personal experience with the group's topic can be beneficial. It creates a shared understanding and can help build trust with the group members. However, as mentioned, individuals with a passion for counseling or volunteering can also be influential facilitators.

Selecting a facilitator who embodies these qualities can greatly enhance the support group's effectiveness and create a supportive space for its members to share, heal, and grow together. Ultimately, the facilitator's role is essential in making the support group a valuable and positive experience for all involved. The end goal of this group is to create a positive mentorship program with the students and a trusted adult. The mentorship goal in the Girl's Empowerment Group is that the students are paired with adult mentors can profoundly impact their personal and professional development. By providing guidance, support, and advice, mentors can serve as role models and help young individuals build the skills and confidence necessary to succeed in various aspects of life.

One of the key focuses of these mentorship programs is to help young people develop a healthy sense of self-worth, self-respect, and self-purpose. These abilities are essential for individuals to take on responsible roles within their communities, whether in school, extracurricular activities, or later in their careers, which can also develop into leadership skills. Here are some specific areas where mentorship programs can help develop a healthy sense of self-worth, self-respect, and self-purpose that can aim to develop leadership skills:

- Communication: Effective communication is crucial for leadership. Mentors can help young people improve their communication skills, including active listening, public speaking, and articulating their ideas clearly.
- Problem-Solving: Mentors can guide mentees through analyzing and addressing challenges. Problem-solving skills are essential for leaders to make informed decisions and find creative solutions.
- Decision-Making: Learning to make sound decisions is a vital aspect of leadership. Mentors can teach young individuals to weigh options, consider consequences, and make informed choices.
- Entrepreneurship: Some mentorship programs may focus on fostering an entrepreneurial mindset. This includes encouraging innovation, risk-taking, and turning ideas into practical ventures.

- 5. **Job Readiness:** Mentors can help mentees prepare for the job market by offering advice on resume writing, interview skills, and professional networking.
- 6. **Employment Opportunities:** Mentors can assist young people in exploring various career paths and understanding the requirements and opportunities in different fields.

By equipping young individuals with these to develop a healthy sense of self-worth, self-respect, and purpose, it can lead to excellent leadership skills and experiences, mentorship programs can positively impact their personal growth, self-confidence, and future success. Additionally, these programs can build a more engaged and empowered generation that actively contributes to their communities and society.

Teaching Content

In our eight-week lesson, the girls will gain tools and approaches to achieve their goals. Below are some examples of what each lesson entails.

- Positive role models: Invite successful and confident women to share their stories and experiences. Having real-life role models can inspire and show teenage girls that they can overcome challenges and achieve their goals.
- Media literacy: Teach critical thinking skills to help girls analyze and question media messages. By understanding the media's manipulative tactics, they can better discern between positive and harmful influences.
- Body positivity and self-acceptance: Conduct workshops or discussions on body positivity, encouraging girls to embrace their uniqueness and value themselves beyond societal beauty standards.

- Healthy relationships: Educate girls about healthy relationships, consent, and recognizing signs of abuse. Empower them to set boundaries and prioritize their well-being.
- Mental health awareness: Create a safe space for discussing mental and emotional well-being. Encourage seeking help when needed and normalize conversations about mental health challenges.
- Peer support groups: Establish small groups where girls can share experiences, struggles, and triumphs. Supportive friendships can have a profound impact on self-esteem.

Group Format

The ten ways to divide the Girls Empowerment Group into groups offer a variety of methods to ensure that students can work with different peers and experience diverse interactions. Each approach has advantages and potential challenges, but they all contribute to creating a dynamic and inclusive group environment. Here's a summary of the different methods:

- Counselor's Choice: The counselor assigns groups, which is the most practical method but may be less fun for the students as they have no say in the group formation.
- Students' Choice: Students get to choose their group members, which can be enjoyable for them, but it might lead to some students working only with their friends, potentially excluding others.
- Students' Choice Switch: Students form their own groups, and then group captains switch to new groups, allowing students to collaborate with different peers.
- Count Off: Students are numbered, then groups are formed based on the counting sequence, ensuring random distribution.

- Schoolyard Pick: Captains take turns selecting team members, promoting a sense of inclusion and eliminating the concept of being picked last.
- Height: Students line up by height, and groups are formed by counting off from one end, ensuring a mix of shorter and taller students in each group.
- Alphabetical: Students line up alphabetically by first name or last initials, and groups are formed based on counting.
- Random Name Generator: Using an online name generator, randomly selected groups eliminate potential biases.
- Sorting Hat: Names are drawn randomly from a hat to create groups.
- Playing Cards: Students are assigned groups based on the matching numbers they receive from a deck of cards.

At the end of the group session, you may ask the students to reflect on the group selection process using an exit slip question like, "Share your thoughts on today's group selection process." This allows students to express their feelings and opinions about the method and provides valuable feedback for future group arrangements.

By using these diverse methods of forming groups, the Girls Empowerment Group can maximize the benefits of working with various peers, foster inclusion, and create a more engaging and enriching experience for all participants.

Techniques

Teaching methods refer to educators' and counselors' overall strategies and approaches to facilitate learning and help students achieve specific learning outcomes. On the other hand,

activities are specific tasks or exercises designed to implement these methods and engage students in the learning process.

Here are some examples of teaching methods and corresponding activities:

- Lecture (Teaching Method): The instructor presents information through spoken words, often accompanied by visual aids such as slides or handouts.
 - Activity: The instructor delivers a comprehensive lecture on a specific topic, providing explanations, examples, and key concepts to the students.
- Group Discussions (Teaching Method): Students actively participate in discussions, sharing ideas and perspectives with their peers.
 - Activity: The class is divided into small groups, each given a topic or question to discuss. They then report their findings or conclusions to the whole class.
- Problem-Solving (Teaching Method): Students use critical thinking and analytical skills to solve real-world problems.
 - Activity: The instructor presents a complex problem, and students work individually or in groups to brainstorm solutions and present their findings.
- Hands-On Activities (Teaching Method): Students learn through practical experiences and direct involvement with the subject matter.
 - Activity: Students conduct experiments or demonstrations for the group to understand principles.
- Role-Playing (Teaching Method): Students act out scenarios or take on specific roles to understand different perspectives or practice real-life situations.

- Activity: In a lesson, students reenact events or portray figures to understand the context better.
- 6. Case Studies (Teaching Method): Students analyze and discuss real or hypothetical situations to apply theoretical knowledge to practical contexts.
 - Activity: Students are given a scenario related to the lesson and analyze the facts to propose solutions or make decisions.
- Multimedia Presentations (Teaching Method): Using various media, such as videos, animations, and interactive software, to enhance learning.
 - Activity: Students will reflect and present their findings.
- Flipped Classroom (Teaching Method): Students will always be given a task at the end of each lesson so the group can review instructional materials outside of class and engage in active learning activities during class time.
 - Activity: Students watch pre-recorded lectures or read material, and they work on problem-solving exercises or group discussions in the group.
- Inquiry-Based Learning (Teaching Method): Students explore and discover knowledge independently by asking questions and investigating the answers.
 - Activity: Students formulate research questions and conduct investigations, gathering evidence to support their findings then discuss with the group.

Effective teaching methods and well-designed activities can lead to enhanced learning experiences and a better understanding of the subject matter. Counselors will often use these methods and activities to cater to different learning styles and ensure a comprehensive and engaging learning environment for their students. Below are more examples:

- Skill-building workshops: Organize workshops focusing on practical skills like decision-making, communication, and coping strategies for managing stress and emotions.
- Community involvement: Engage the girls in community service and volunteering opportunities. Contributing positively to society can boost self-esteem and provide a sense of purpose.
- Empowerment through art and expression: Encourage creative expression through art, writing, or other forms of self-expression. Art can be therapeutic and help girls explore their feelings and experiences.
- Encourage healthy hobbies: Promote participation in sports, outdoor activities, or other pursuits that promote physical and mental well-being.
- Parent involvement: Involve parents and guardians to reinforce the messages and tools at home. A united effort can create a more significant impact.
- Celebrate achievements: Recognize and celebrate the girls' accomplishments, big or small. Positive reinforcement can strengthen their belief in their abilities.

Lesson Plans (Click ON EACH link of the lesson plan)

Session 1: Knowing Yourself (Introduction) - Jensine

- a. Setting culture
- b. How powerful your voice can be
- c. Understanding your personality and those around you

Session 2: Knowing Your Voice (Self-Advocacy) - Jensine

a. Communication and miscommunication

- b. Healthy conflict resolution
- c. Communication

Session 3: Knowing Your Identity (Self-Confidence) - Grant

- a. Self-worth
- b. The power of the mind
- c. Confidence

Session 4: Knowing Your Environment (Self-Empowerment) - Grant

- a. Safe people
- a. Safe relationships
- b. Boundaries

Session 5: Knowing Your Behavior (Self-Care) - Kathleen

- a. Identifying emotions
- b. Neutralizing the trigger
- c. Releasing triggers

Session 6: Knowing Your Feelings (Self-Esteem) - Kathleen

- a. Personal strengths
- b. Personal passions
- c. Personal vision/belief system

Session 7: Knowing The Barriers (Self-Compassion) - Kim

- a. Strength, Courage, and Wisdom
- b. Perception & culture
- c. How to overcome

Session 8: Tools For Success (Self-Acceptance) - Kim

- a. Self-care
- b. Mindful Meditation

In Conclusion

Empowering teenage girls is an ongoing process, and building a solid sense of self-worth and self-purpose takes time. We will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the girl's empowerment group initiatives and be open to participant feedback to make improvements and adjustments. Providing the proper support and tools can help these girls lead fulfilling and empowered lives, protecting them from negative influences and victimization. Remember, empowering the students beyond the classroom provides them with the necessary skills to address the needs of an ever-changing world. Students who can transfer their skills developed inside the school to new environments help them confidently tackle new situations.

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Rose & Thorn Share Out

EXIT TICKET https://forms.gle/3k7dizHpsjBe29fk9

https://youtu.be/IcHo5PNTclw

https://forms.gle/BQ3SpifdzC6LBaQ18

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1TPLKbaSrhHpmpb7Gtp-FiA6pibfEsUSwwWwM-R3o VaM/edit?copiedFromTrash#slide=id.g1414a6049ff_0_415

https://www.youtubeeducation.com/watch?v=IcHo5PNTclw

https://youtu.be/1S0RKRRyqhQ