

Research on Strategies for College Counselors in Conducting Mental Health Education for College Students

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Abstract: In recent years, with the rapid development of society and increasing competition, the mental health of college students has garnered more attention. Influenced by changes in their educational, family, and social environments, college students face new demands for mental health education. In the practice of mental health education, college counselors play a key role as guides in promoting students' holistic development, guardians in optimizing the university mental health education system, and managers in enhancing the effectiveness of mental health education. This paper first introduces common psychological issues among college students then discusses the necessity for college counselors to conduct mental health education from three perspectives, and finally proposes four strategies for counselors to implement mental health education, with the aim of providing a reference for student management in higher education institutions.

Keywords: College Counselors; College Students; Mental Health; Education Strategies.

1. Introduction

Mental health education, also known as psychological quality education or mental education, is an integral part of holistic education. Its goal is to help students develop a healthy psychological mindset, acquire skills for psychological adjustment and adaptation, and achieve overall mental and physical well-being. For college students to become qualified builders and reliable successors of socialism, they need not only solid knowledge and strong abilities but also a robust psychological foundation to cope with the pressures and challenges of an increasingly competitive era. Therefore, as mentors guiding the growth and success of young college students college counselors must pay close attention to and understand students' psychological conditions, identify the root causes of their psychological issues, and implement targeted mental health education.

2. Common Psychological Issues Among College students

2.1. Anxiety and Depression

In recent years, various psychological problems such as anxiety and depression have increasingly emerged on campuses. If not addressed in a timely manner, these issues can lead to campus incidents. Most cases of self-harm on campus are closely related to psychological problems. The primary reasons for these issues include difficulties in managing relationships with roommates and classmates, inability to balance life and study, excessive academic pressure, low self-esteem, and family difficulties. As a result of these challenges, many students experience anxiety, nervous tension, and in more severe cases, symptoms such as loss of appetite and depression [1]. Over time, these issues can escalate into psychological imbalances and loss of behavioral control, leading to self-harm behaviors.

2.2. Social Anxiety

When entering a new living and learning environment, college students often develop social anxiety, which manifests as a lack of confidence, poor social skills, or insecurity about their appearance or abilities. These feelings can cause fear during social interactions. Excessive self-consciousness and excessive concern with how others perceive them, along with a fear of criticism or judgment, contribute to social anxiety [2]. Additionally, some students may lack social experience, particularly those who were more introverted during high school. Upon entering university and facing frequent group activities and interpersonal interactions, they may feel uncomfortable and develop social anxiety and anxiety.

2.3. Addictive Behaviors

Upon entering university, students face various psychological pressures and uncertainties, and the virtual world often meets many of their psychological needs. Introverted students or those who have experienced setbacks are particularly prone to escaping reality by becoming absorbed in the online world, where they can fulfill fantasies that are difficult to achieve in real life. This deepens the divide between the virtual world and reality. Issues such as internet addiction and gaming addiction are prevalent among college students not only affecting their academic performance and daily lives but also potentially leading to psychological problems such as escapism from reality.

3. Analysis of the Necessity for College Counselors to Conduct Mental Health Education for College students

3.1. The Need to Promote Holistic Student Development

Mental health is the foundation of a student's overall development. A mentally healthy student is not only capable

of achieving academic excellence but also demonstrates strong interpersonal skills, emotional management, and social adaptability [3]. Through mental health education, counselors can assist students in enhancing their self-awareness, emotional regulation, and stress management, thereby fostering their comprehensive development in academics, life, and personal growth.

3.2. The Need to Prevent Psychological Crises and Reduce Negative Incidents

By conducting mental health education, counselors can identify students' psychological issues at an early stage, particularly potential crisis signals. Through early intervention, counselors can effectively prevent the occurrence of severe psychological problems or crises, reducing the risk of extreme behaviors such as self-harm or suicide. This also helps minimize negative incidents on campus and mitigates the damage caused by psychological crises.

3.3. The Need to Enhance Students' Psychological Resilience to Face Future Challenges

As societal competition intensifies, students will face greater challenges and pressures when they enter the workforce and society. Mental health education helps counselors cultivate well-rounded psychological resilience, strong coping skills, and adaptability to societal changes in students, laying a solid foundation for them to better handle the pressures of work and life after graduation.

4. Strategies for College Counselors to Conduct Mental Health Education for College students

4.1. Implement Effective Mental Health Education to Improve Students' Psychological Resilience

4.1.1. Classroom Education

Incorporating mental health knowledge into compulsory or elective courses in higher education can help students systematically learn how to cope with stress and manage emotions. The curriculum should cover the fundamentals of mental health, methods and techniques for psychological adjustment, as well as the identification and management of common psychological issues among college students. Teaching methods should emphasize interactive, experiential, and heuristic approaches to stimulate students' interest and initiative. Various methods such as lectures, case studies, role-playing, psychological assessments, and dynamic video-based teaching should be employed to enhance student engagement and improve the effectiveness of instruction [4].

4.1.2. Practical Activities

In the ideological education of college counselors, it is very important to carry out practical activities of mental health education. Regular class meetings on psychological topics can be organized to improve students' psychological quality and self-cognition through self-sharing and communication. Mental health lectures, theme salons, group counseling, etc., can also be regularly held, psychological drama activities can be carried out, so that students can experience mental states in different situations through role playing, and enhance self-

regulation ability. Guide students to establish correct mental health concept and optimistic quality, and enhance students' attention to mental health [5][6].

4.1.3. Psychological Crisis Intervention and Response Mechanism

A comprehensive psychological crisis intervention system should be established, encompassing early warning, crisis management, and follow-up. This ensures timely intervention when students encounter major psychological crises. Crisis intervention helps students cope with psychological challenges and improve their mental resilience. Counselors should use various methods to assess students' psychological status, such as engaging in conversations, observing behavioral patterns, and conducting mental health surveys. Targeted crisis intervention should be offered based on the findings. Counselors should also provide one-on-one psychological counseling services and collaborate with on-campus and external mental health centers or hospitals to offer professional treatment for students with severe psychological issues.

4.1.4. Genuine Care, Empathy and Methodology

Counselors must first establish a genuine emotional connection with students by actively understanding their living and academic conditions and offering emotional support. Empathy is essential, allowing counselors to quickly detect students' psychological changes and provide emotional guidance and humanistic care. Since each student has unique psychological needs, counselors should respect individual differences and offer personalized support. By addressing students' concerns regarding daily life, academic pressure, and family background, counselors can help students resolve their difficulties. Regular emotional communication and ideological education should occur, not only in times of crisis but also as part of everyday interactions, allowing counselors to become trusted confidants for students [7]. Counselors must continually enhance their professional competence by studying psychology, education, and management, through resources like libraries, online courses, and training sessions, thereby improving their professional skills and job proficiency [8][9]. It is essential for counselors to be well-versed in basic psychological theories and knowledge, especially in recognizing common issues such as depression and anxiety [10]. Colleges and universities often have systematic mental health education programs in place, and counselors should adhere to these frameworks, following relevant policies and procedures to ensure that educational activities are legal and standardized.

4.2. Conduct Psychological Assessments and Establish Health Records

Upon enrollment, all students should undergo a comprehensive psychological assessment, and detailed psychological profiles should be created. These records must include not only basic information such as personal details and medical history but also data on students' family background, family medical history, and contact information. This will help understand the origins of any psychological issues. It is important to keep the contact information of students' parents or guardians on file to facilitate timely communication if a problem is identified [11]. After the assessment, the results should be summarized and analyzed to identify groups of students with potential psychological issues. Counselors can use statistical reports generated by

psychological evaluation platforms to assess the overall mental health of the student population and individual differences. Based on the evaluation results, students should be categorized into different risk levels. Counselors should pay special attention to high-risk students (e.g., those with severe anxiety or depression) and collaborate with the campus psychological counseling center to provide targeted support. Mental health records should be regularly updated, especially for students whose psychological conditions show significant fluctuations. At the end of each academic year, students' mental health status and assessment results should be recorded.

4.3. Peer Support Programs

Peer support, also known as peer counseling or semi-professional consultation, refers to a process in which students with some psychological knowledge and helping skills provide psychological guidance under the supervision of professional counselors.

Peer support emphasizes peer interaction, promoting psychological assistance within student groups. Since peers have the closest interactions with each other, this type of counseling can be highly effective. Counselors can organize small group counseling sessions as part of class management, assigning dedicated mental health monitors to observe students exhibiting abnormal behavior or significant changes. These monitors can then coordinate peer interventions to help release negative emotions and restore confidence and positivity. Furthermore, when students experience support from others, they develop a mindset of mutual assistance, finding satisfaction in helping others, which in turn fosters a culture of psychological support among peers.

4.4. Family-School Collaboration

Counselors can collaborate with parents to jointly monitor students' mental health. Close cooperation and communication between families and schools can help reduce the likelihood of psychological issues developing. Counselors should maintain regular communication with students' parents, fostering strong family-school connections to understand the underlying causes of students' psychological problems and facilitate the smooth implementation of mental health education programs [12].

In the course of their work, college counselors must pay close attention to the influence of students' family backgrounds. When communicating with students, counselors should be mindful of their relationships with their families. If psychological problems are rooted in family issues, counselors should actively engage with the student, listening to their concerns and providing differentiated guidance. By helping students appreciate the positive aspects of campus life, counselors can assist them in improving their emotional well-being. Students should be encouraged to adjust their inner emotions, and counselors should offer support during times of distress, becoming trusted companions in their growth journey. Furthermore, counselors should educate parents on mental health topics, helping them communicate effectively with their children and monitor their psychological changes. This ensures that students experience warmth and support from their families in their daily lives.

5. Conclusion

The mental health issues of college students have increasingly become a critical topic in higher education

management. As key mentors in students' growth, counselors play an indispensable role in mental health education. Through scientific psychological assessments, the establishment of comprehensive mental health records, and the effective implementation of psychological education activities, counselors can promptly identify and intervene in students' psychological issues, helping them improve their mental resilience and enhance their ability to cope with stress and setbacks.

In the future, college counselors should continue to optimize mental health education models, strengthen collaboration with professional psychological counseling teams, and deepen the content of psychological education while improving personalized guidance. Moreover, it is essential to strengthen a campus-wide mental health support system, fostering a healthy and harmonious psychological environment that supports the holistic development of students. The work of mental health education is a long-term endeavor. Counselors must carry out their duties with care, empathy, and adherence to regulations, ensuring the physical and mental well-being of students.

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