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# Build Multiculturally Aware Students

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# {Our Context}

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## Today's Work

- Understanding multicultural education
- Integrating multicultural education
  - Classroom guidance
  - Small counseling groups
  - School wide interventions
- Research
- Questions



## Learning outcomes:

Upon completion of this webinar, participants should be able to:

- Discuss the need for multicultural education in K-12 schools and the relevant role school counselors have in leading multicultural education efforts.
- Use best practices in approaching sensitive multicultural education topics in schools.
- Design and implement multicultural education interventions via school counseling core curriculum lessons, group counseling and schoolwide interventions.
- Describe how current school counselors are currently implementing multicultural education in schools.



## Multicultural Education:

A field of study focused on

reducing prejudice

ensuring that all students have equal opportunities for success



## Why Multicultural Education?

- Increasing diversity in K-12 public schools
  - Race/ethnicity
  - Language
  - Socioeconomic status
  - Disability
- Increasing segregation in K-12 public schools
- An opportunity to increase the multicultural knowledge, skills, and awareness of K-12 students
- A chance to generate a more multiculturally aware generation of adults





## Why School Counselors?

- Have appropriate training and preparation to lead multicultural education efforts in schools.
- School counselors have a system-wide perspective given their position in schools.
- Multicultural education addresses students' social/emotional, academic, and career needs.
- Multicultural education has the potential to reduce violence, decrease bullying, and improve school climates.



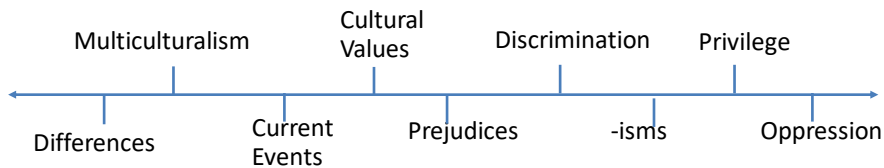
## Defining Multiculturalism

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Socioeconomic status
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Gender
- Ability status
- Age





## The Spectrum of Sensitivity



- Grade/development
- School culture
- Administrative and faculty support
- Community support



This work is messy.

It requires:

- Vulnerability
- Making mistakes
- Forgiveness



## How Can School Counselors Implement Multicultural Education?

1. Classroom Guidance
2. Small Group Counseling
3. Schoolwide Interventions



## Multicultural Education in Classroom Guidance





## Lesson 1: Pizza and Differences



“Today we’re going to talk about our differences, and we’re going to start by talking about pizza!”

- Give students a picture of a blank pizza. Ask them to color it in and draw their favorite pizza toppings on it.
- Have students share their pizza picture with the class and state their favorite pizza toppings, or if they like pizza at all.
- Ask students:
  - Were there any similarities?
  - Were there any differences?
  - Do we treat each other differently based on their favorite pizza toppings?
  - What are some other differences we have?
- Discuss several types of differences, being sure to bring up race, gender, language, and ability, among others. Ask students: Do we treat each other differently based on these differences?



## Lesson 2: Our Multicultural Stars and Selves

“Today we are going to explore our multicultural identities and what is important to each of us.”

- Pass out cut-out five-pointed stars.
- Write your name on one point of the star.
- Write each of the following characteristics on the other points of the star:
  - Your first language
  - Your hair color
  - Your race
  - Your gender.
- In the center of the star, write something about yourself that you are proud of.
- Take a few minutes and decorate your star to make it as beautiful as possible.





## Lesson 2: Our Multicultural Stars and Selves Cont.

- Pick up your star and...
  - If your name ends in anything other than “ie” or “y,” tear off the point with your name on it .
  - If your first language is anything other than English, tear off the point with your language on it.
  - If your hair color is anything other than blonde, tear off the point with your hair color.
  - If your race is anything other than White, tear off the point with your race on it.
  - If your gender is anything other than male, tear off the point with your gender on it.
- Discuss:
  - How did you feel after you had decorated your star?
  - How did you feel when you ripped points off?
  - If you didn’t rip a point off, how did you feel when you saw others rip points off their stars?
  - How do you feel about your star now?
- Continue the discussion: Have you ever felt this way before? If so, what caused you to feel this way? How does this activity resemble how we treat one another? What are some ways we “rip off points” of other people’s “stars”? What can we do to prevent this or to reattach “points”?



## Lesson 3: Character Walk

“Today we are going to imagine what it’s like to have different privileges.”

- Give students a description of a character, and ask each student to imagine what it’s like to be that person. Characters can be created or selected from books and movies, perhaps those students have been studying.

For example:

Created characters:

- A 16-year old student with a single mother, two part-time jobs after school, and an ill grandparent to take care of.
- A 44-year old adult with a well-paying job, college degree, and long hours at work

Book or movie characters:

- Tom Sawyer from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*
- Katniss Everdeen from *Hunger Games*
- Romeo from *Romeo and Juliet*







## Lesson 3: Character Walk cont.

- Ask students to line up on side of the room.
- Read a series of prompts containing privileges, and ask students to step forward each time the prompt applies to their character. Prompts can also include experiences with oppression, which cause students to take a step back.

For example:

- If you grew up with more than three books in your home, take a step forward.
- If you were raised by two parents, take a step forward.
- If you are struggling financially, take a step backward.
- If you have ever the power, water, or cable turned off because you didn't pay your bill, take a step backward.
- If you feel like you have to work extra hard to represent your race well, take a step backward.
- If you have ever been discriminated against because of a disability, take a step backward.
- If you have a college degree, take a step forward.



## Lesson 3: Character Walk cont.

- Moving from the front of the room to the back of the room, ask students to read their character description aloud.
- Ask students to reflect on their position in the room and that of their peers. Discuss:
  - What themes do you notice in the placement of students throughout the room?
  - How might this activity relate to what some people encounter in real life?
  - How can we use this activity to understand one other better?





## Lesson 4: -Isms in the News High School



“A lot of controversial and upsetting events have been happening in the country lately. I want to hear what you are feeling about these events.”

- Select a controversial event that has recently happened that may highlight racism or discrimination towards others. Project a picture or words representing this event for students to view.
- Give students index cards and ask them to write down their reactions to seeing the picture.
- Collect the cards, and read several aloud to the class. Ask students to dialogue maturely about their thoughts to the opinions on the cards.
- Facilitate a discussion among students validating their opinions on either side of the controversy. Focus on feelings and connecting group members.



## Multicultural Education in Small Counseling Groups

- Psychoeducation groups about multicultural education
  - With “popular opinion leaders”
  - With bullying perpetrators
  - With students who need friends
- Infusing multicultural topics into
  - Social skills groups
  - Self-esteem groups
  - Groups with students with disabilities





## Multicultural Education in School Wide Initiatives

- Mix It Up at Lunch Day: <http://www.tolerance.org/mix-it-up/>
- No Name-Calling Week: <http://www.glsen.org/nonamecallingweek>
- Rachel's Challenge: <http://rachelschallenge.org/>
- AVID: <http://www.avid.org/>
- Restorative Practices: <http://schottfoundation.org/restorative-practices>



## Research: School Counselors Implementing Multicultural Education

*"What multicultural education behaviors are you currently enacting?"*

N = 594 Virginia school counselors

### Two Tools

- Professional Development **rarely**
- Classroom Guidance **occasionally**

### Three Approaches

- Human Relations **occasionally/frequently**
- Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different **rarely**
- Knowledge Construction **rarely**

Total variance = 72%





## Research: School Counselors Implementing Multicultural Education

- Leading classroom guidance lessons on multiculturalism
- Delivering a county-mandated unit on discrimination and bullying in their school counseling core curricula
- Leading professional development for colleagues on working with transgender students
- Supporting a multicultural celebration night
- Sponsoring a student organization for African American students in advanced courses



## Concluding Thoughts on Multicultural Education in School Counseling





# Questions?

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