

Small Groups with the Counselor

Dear Parent,

Great news! Small guidance groups will be forming soon and running throughout the year. Currently, there are eight topics offered to students at Hyer (see the below document for descriptions). The purpose of small group counseling is to complement and enhance students' learning by improving their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. Small group guidance provides a safe setting where children, along with their peers, can increase their self-awareness and improve their cooperation and communication skills. The children can learn from each other. Ultimately the goal of small group guidance is to prevent problems in the future by teaching children new skills. There are many reasons why children could be included in a small group. When children have issues arise at school or at home, they might need a little extra positive attention to practice healthy skills that will help them in school and life.

Every child can benefit from participation in a small group. Students can be invited to join a group by parent request, teacher or counselor suggestion, or by the students themselves. Students must have parent permission to participate in a small group.

I will meet with small groups throughout the school year, based on the specific needs of students. Each group meets about 5-6 times for 30 minute sessions. We typically meet every week, depending on schedules, assemblies, meetings, etc.

If you feel your child might benefit from participating in a small group, feel free to contact me by e-mail or phone. You can also fill out the form below, indicate a choice, sign at the bottom, and return it to Miss Thompson's office.

Small groups are not therapy. If you feel your child needs therapy, or therapy has been recommended by an outside professional, you may contact your child's doctor or medical insurance provider for a list. I also have a list of outside therapy resources for children that I am willing to share with parents.

Thank you for the opportunity to share what Hyer's guidance program has to offer your child. If you have any questions please contact Miss Thompson at 214-780-3340 or at thompsl@hpsd.org. I hope this is a wonderful school year for all!

Sincerely,

Linde Thompson
School Guidance Counselor

Parent Permission Form for Small Guidance Group Topics

Student First & Last Name: _____ Grade: _____
Homeroom Teacher: _____

Goals: Small guidance groups are coping-skills based and are not professional therapy. Your child's group will primarily focus on identification of feelings, how to use appropriate problem solving skills, and learning and practicing healthy habits to help improve self-confidence, concentration, and success in school.

Duration: Groups will meet 5-6 times for 30 minute sessions approximately once a week.

_____ **DEALING WITH DIFFICULT FEELINGS (Anger Management) Group:**

The group will focus on expressing and managing anger in an effective and healthy way.

- Recognizing physical and emotional responses to anger
- Exploring thoughts/feelings and situations that lead to anger
- Develop strategies to manage anger in a positive manner

_____ **IMPULSE CONTROL Group:**

The group will focus on providing students tools to stop and think before acting.

- Define and explain the concept of impulses and impulse control
- Practicing delayed response (stop) and internal language (think)
- Recognizing the benefits to using impulse control and the liabilities of not using it

_____ **ANXIETY Group:**

Providing students with the tools they need to overcome their anxious feelings.

- Identifying individual triggers for anxiety
- Tools for dealing with anxiety
- Turning negative thinking into positive thinking

_____ **MY FRIENDS AND ME Group:**

For students experiencing difficulty in making and keeping friends.

- Talking and listening
- Friendly behaviors
- Friendship problem solvers

_____ **V.I.P. (Very Important Person – Self Confidence):**

For students who need support in building self-esteem.

- Handling mistakes and perseverance
- Sources of motivation (What and Who Motivates You)
- Understanding the ripple effect of attitude

SURVIVING AND THRIVING IN THE GIRL WORLD

For girls in 2nd through 4th grade in order to counteract girl bullying.

- Teasing, gossip, exclusion
- Owning your mistakes
- The importance of reputation

CHANGING FAMILIES Group:

For students experiencing a recent divorce in their immediate family.

- Identifying and communicating feelings
- Understanding family changes
- Making the best of the new family situation

HURTING HEARTS Group:

For students grieving the recent loss of a significant person in their life.

- Remembering our loved one
- Learn ways to express feelings and deal with emotions

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PARENT PERMISSION

_____ I **DO** give permission for my child to participate in the group checked above during the 2014-2015 school year. Feel free to contact the Counselor, Linde Thompson, with any helpful information (214-780-3340 or thompsl@hpisd.org). You may also write a note and include it with this form.

Please fill out the following information below in the event I need to contact you:

Parent Daytime Phone: _____ Email: _____

By providing your email, you agree that I may utilize e-mail to contact and communicate with you about your child.

Print Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Note: Every effort will be made to include your child in one of the choices you have indicated. Small group guidance meetings are academically focused and conducted on a short-term basis. If there is an immediate need for your child to be in a group, please write me a note or call. I can only run a few groups at a time and will be running groups for the remainder of the school year. Since guidance groups are NOT therapy and if you feel your child needs therapy, please contact Linde Thompson for additional resources or a referral list for professional counseling. Information from small guidance groups may be shared with HPISD personnel who have an educational need to know (such as the classroom teacher).