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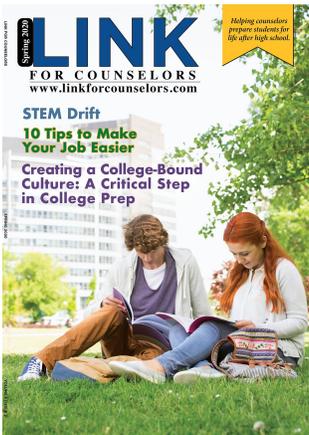


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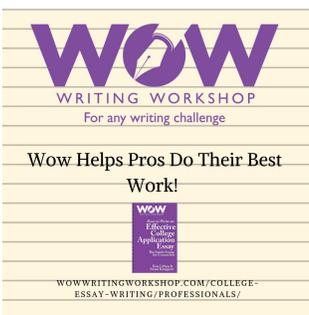
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Tech Tools for Counselors in Elementary & Middle Schools (<https://www.linkforcounselors.com/tech-tools-for-counselors-in-elementary-middle-schools/>)

As part of its 2016 revision, the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors took special care in researching and providing specific guidelines related to the use and inclusion of technology in the 21st century school counseling office, as they recognized the critical role that technology plays in a counselor's ability to more effectively communicate, evaluate and assess the learning and engagement of counselees, and to simply have a more extensive repertoire of resources availed to them in their support of student growth and development. While school counselors may believe that the inclusive of technology into their program will distract from the soft skills

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of technology into their program will distract from the soft skills

generally associated with the profession; the following anecdotes

from counselors at different levels demonstrate how technology can enhance your program.

Elementary:

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Many school counselors present interactive lessons with various grade levels to provide strategies to encourage students to be honest and truthful about sensitive issues such as bullying, rumor spreading, and violence prevention. An interactive and anonymous way to have students enjoy and feel comfortable participating is by using "Plickers". Plickers (Paper Clickers) is a real-time assessment tool that allows educators to poll students without the need for student devices. In order to scan students' responses, you must install the Plickers mobile App. Plickers is available for free on Google Play Store and the iOS App Store.

Years ago, I imagined sending photos to the parents of our smiling Kindergarten and new students. Now it can easily be done! This year, when parents sign up for "Remind", this and so many other gains can occur! Counselors enhance their communication with parents of students who need them most. Remind is also a free way to send text messages to a group of parents; but their responses are individual and only seen by you! An instant and effective way to collaborate with families and support students!

Many teachers at the elementary level use "Class Dojo" to create a positive class community and increase the home-school connection. School counselors can also become part of that same class community by checking Dojo points earned by students and groups. By helping these students create classroom goals, they may attain the positive feedback from Dojo input that can be shared with families!

Upper Elementary/Middle

A couple of years ago, I organized a "New Students" group with several new boys who came from a variety of backgrounds. Coming from private schools, an urban setting, cross-country, and even new to America, the common thread was that these sixth graders were trying to find their way through a 600 students per grade level school, a new town, and even a new culture.

In group, we broke down the topics into five main themes: locker tips, navigating the cafeteria, making friends, being organized, and miscellaneous tips (ex: don't have to change for PE class, but sneakers required). We developed a list of helpful hints in these five areas. Each student then picked one topic to create a comic using StoryboardThat (<http://www.storyboardthat.com/>), a free, online

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storyboard/comic strip maker. It was incredibly easy to navigate, and the students enjoyed making the comics! I then put the comics together so we could share these helpful tips with other new students.

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At the Middle School level, I noticed that our students were having a difficult time transitioning from elementary to middle school. After polling the needs of the students, we drafted an in-person lesson to address the fifth grade. Study Skills, Behavior, Social Life, the Schedule, and Locker Tips were the main points to cover. Sixth Grade students worked collaboratively to draft the tips and then practiced their presentation skills to their group. Following the lessons, I invited students who were comfortable with public speaking/acting to create a movie to be shared online and with future transitioning middle school students. After receiving permission from teachers and parents, we walked around the hallways and filmed in various locations. The students even assisted with editing the imovie including music and titles! This technological tool was shown at Back-to-School Night and was a great hit! Incorporating the five minute video clip of real middle school students into work presentations or guidance lessons enthused members of the staff, students, and families in the community.

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