

CREATING A SAFE SPACE: INTEGRATING GUIDANCE COUNSELING APPROACHES INTO EVERYDAY CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

by:

Ma. Lyn F. Torrevillas

Guidance Counselor III, Bonifacio Camacho National High School

Building a psychologically safe learning environment has become a critical aspect of modern learning and development, and guidance counselors are central to this mission. They understand that before meaningful learning can occur, learners must feel emotionally secure and accepted. Guidance counselors advocate for the integration of counseling principles—such as empathy, active listening, and positive reinforcement—into classroom instruction. According to Cruz and Pineda (2022), classrooms that apply counseling-informed approaches experience fewer behavioral distractions and greater student contribution. In addition, Andini and Rachmawati (2023) presumed that supportive communication between teachers and counselors develops a culture of respect and openness among learners. These ways allow learners to learn without fear of judgment or failure.

Moreover, guidance counselors also recognize that building safe spaces requires constant collaboration among all school personnel. They often train teachers in distinguishing emotional distress signals and managing sensitive situations with empathy. Regular coordination between counselors and teachers guarantees that interventions are timely and individualized. As noted by Lestari (2021), incorporating counseling methods such as reflective dialogue and emotional check-ins within lessons improves learner engagement and reduces anxiety. Counselors therefore promote teaching approaches that value emotional intelligence as much as cognitive mastery, leading to a more comprehensive and effective classroom climate.

Furthermore, guidance counselors envision schools as shelters for growth – where learners are not only trained but also understood. With this, embedding guidance principles into instruction, they foster a culture where emotional safety supports academic risk-taking and creative thinking. A safe space in education does not simply mean freedom from harm; it represents an atmosphere where learners feel valued, capable, and empowered to express themselves. Counselors play an endless role in reminding teachers that teaching the heart is just as critical as teaching the mind.

References:

Andini, S., & Rachmawati, L. (2023). The role of counselor-teacher collaboration in fostering supportive classroom environments. *Journal of Counseling and Education Research*, 4(1).

Cruz, A. M., & Pineda, R. (2022). Integrating counseling techniques into classroom management practices. *Philippine Journal of School Guidance*, 5(2).

Lestari, D. (2021). Reflective teaching and counseling-based classroom strategies for student engagement. *Indonesian Journal of Educational Psychology*, 10(3).