



# Making a Difference

December, 2012

[www.mtschoolcounselor.org](http://www.mtschoolcounselor.org)

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## 'Tis the Season ... To Take Care ... For Goodness Sake!

By Lisa Kuehn, MSCA President

The Christmas carols are playing ... "'Tis the season to be jolly ...." and "...he knows if you've been bad or good, so be good for goodness sake!" Yet there can be no doubt that this time of year is often rated as the most stressful for everyone, and school counselors are no exception. In fact, just yesterday, an administrator remarked, "I know you as school counselors & teachers take excellent care of our students, but who takes care of you?" The best answer is

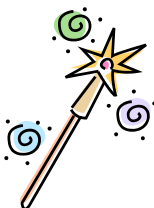
YOU! Whether it's participating in exercise or meditation, savoring our favorite beverage with a friend, indulging in a sweet treat, or listening to music while cleaning the bathroom, we CAN and SHOULD take care of ourselves physically, mentally, and emotionally. Nobody knows what we need better than we do; yet paying attention to our own needs doesn't even begin to make the list during this hectic time of year. I encourage each of

you to find some time, even 5 minutes will do, and contemplate and put into action how you can better take care of yourself. Don't wait for tomorrow. Don't even wait for the new year resolution to kick in. Do it now! You, my school counselor friends, are so worth the time and effort, and remember self-care really is the gift that keeps on giving.

I wish each of you the best of everything this holiday season has to offer!

## Important Dates

- Logo Content Deadline, Jan 4, 2012
- Pacific Regional Leadership Conference, Feb 2013
- MSCA Spring Conference Early Registration Deadline March 31, 2013
- MSCA Spring Conference, Bozeman, Apr 11-12, 2013
- ASCA National Conference Philadelphia, PA June 30-July 3, 2013

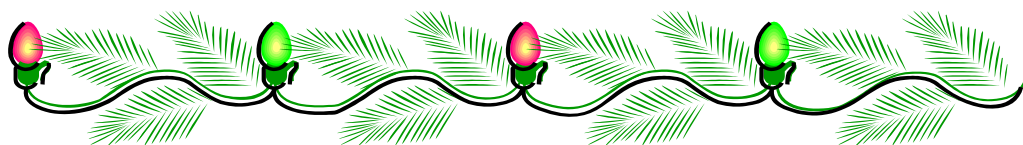
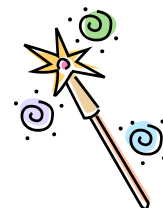


## SAVE THE DATE!

### April 11-12, 2013

### MSCA Spring Conference:

## School Counseling Magic: Tricks of Our Trade!



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# Sharing Ideas—Freshman Transition Class

By Jodi Morgan, President-Elect

**“....ease  
freshmen into  
high school  
while teaching  
them life long  
skills....”**

This school year is the second year Thompson Falls High School has offered a class to all 9<sup>th</sup> grade students called Freshmen Academy. Three years ago the district cut study halls from the high school requiring students to take seven courses each day. This change did not pose a problem for our older students as they have the opportunity to work as a teacher's aide, participate in work release or have a senior skip period. The students who were having a difficult time were the freshmen. Many were not adjusting to the academic rigor of high school with the added responsibility of extra curricular activities. The focus of Academy was to help ease freshmen into high school while teaching them life long skills for success.

The Academy is a highly structured study environment

for the development of study skills and disciplined academic habits. Students have access to subject specific peer and teacher tutoring and are required to demonstrate specific skills, strategies and habits applied to their studies in order to earn credit for the course. Certified teachers facilitate the classes which are offered at the end of the school day. Our freshmen are divided into a 6<sup>th</sup> period Academy and a 7<sup>th</sup> period Academy. Academy students take advantage of this valuable time and are taught the following skills:

## Organization

\*\*Notebooks, binders and lockers

\*\*Use of a planner and assignment book

## Study habits & strategies

\*\*Time management

\*\*Setting a conducive environment

\*\*Effective note taking

\*\*Peer review

\*\*Simulating assessments

\*\*Writing skills

As the high school counselor, I have utilized the Academy class to spend time introducing the Montana Career Information System to the freshmen and as time to meet with individual students. In addition, teachers of Academy serve as academic advisers and track student attendance and academic progress. The classroom atmosphere is one that emulates caring relationships which encourages students to attend school. Academy has been a successful experience for our 9<sup>th</sup> graders and has provided a smooth high school transition.

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## 2nd Annual Logo Contest Announced!

Once again, the MSCA is seeking entries for its annual spring conference logo from Montana student artists. This year's conference is entitled, "School Counseling Magic: Tricks of Our Trade," and logos should take this title into consideration. The top three logos will be recognized in our spring newsletter and will receive: 1st place—\$100, 2nd place—\$50, and 3rd place—\$25. **For a complete listing of logo contest rules and an entry form, please go to page 7 of this newsletter.**

All entries will be displayed at the conference social on Thursday evening, April 11, and winners will be announced by Friday, January 4, 2013. We look forward to celebrating the talents of our students at the 2012 Conference!



Last year's winning logo ...

# Season's Greetings!

## Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

### Happy Hanukkah! Feliz Navidad! *Happy Kwanzaa!*

Whichever holiday greeting you prefer, know that our thoughts and best wishes are with you during your holiday season!

-MSCA Executive Board



## The Adolescent Brain

By Marolane Stevenson, Past President

I read the best article in the ASCA journal about the brain written by Terence J. Houlihan, school counselor and director of the peer counseling program at Iona Preparatory School in N.Y. and Eileen C. Houlihan, counselor at Frank McCourt High School in N.Y. The information provided may be new or refresh our memory about the adolescent brain. It is so well written that I have printed much of the article as they stated.

Sometimes, we need to remind adults that the pre-frontal cortex of adolescents' is still developing. This is the part of the brain responsible for executive skills, such as time management, organization, short-term memory, goal setting, initiation and self-restraint. These skills are not mastered until the 20's and 30's. Adult brains have all the connections built, but adolescents' brains do not, although they are expected to arrive at the same destination, at the same time, without any of the roads. Even though parents and teachers will become frus-

trated with the teens who forgot to take out the garbage or hand in their homework or respond kindly to a question, these teenagers just don't have the brain capacity to do those things yet. Boys are producing 20 times the amount of testosterone than when they were in elementary school. Testosterone has been shown to increase aggression and decrease the desire to talk and connect socially. They also produce vasopressin, which has been shown to affect the way they read facial expressions. When combined with testosterone the stress hormone cortisol kicks in. If a teacher calls on an eighth grade boy in class who doesn't have his homework, these three hormones will flood his brain, and with an already underdeveloped prefrontal cortex, he might respond in a regrettable manner.

Girls are influenced by estrogen and progesterone. The initial surge of estrogen results in their feeling confident and energetic. Toward the latter

part of the menstrual cycle, when the progesterone kicks in, the girl will shift from the wonderful world of estrogen to the land of progesterone irritability.

Just when teachers and parents have had enough adolescent rebellion and moodiness, nature decides to make teenagers' sleep cycles go through a radical shift. When estrogen and progesterone are at high levels, these teenagers fall asleep time usually drops back by about two hours. While they may nod off by nine or ten now their brains won't let them fall asleep until 11 p.m. or midnight. The National Sleep Foundation recommends adolescents get at least nine hours of sleep to experience optimal performance during the day. With many school start times at 7 a.m., adolescents are in what one researcher refers to as a continuous state of jet lag. Chronically sleep deprived students have added moody

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# Goals of Behavior: What You Can Do to Redirect

By Katey Franklin, President-Elect-Elect

The following is an excerpt from a piece that Dr. Rebecca Koltz and I published with Montana Parent magazine (November, 2012). I am sharing it with you in hopes that you may share it with your students' parents and guardians or perhaps utilize in staff trainings to help adults conceptualize and understand children's behaviors. Dr. Koltz and I are writing monthly columns in Montana Parent that addresses specific goals of behavior... stay tuned for more! Please contact me directly if you would like more information or resources.

Have you ever wondered or said out loud in exasperation, "Why in the heck is my child acting like that?!" If so, sit back and read- we intend to examine children's goals of behaviors. Moreover, we will identify parenting skills for redirection when children are engaging in maladaptive means of obtaining goals of behavior.

Alfred Adler, a famous psychologist, postulated that all human behavior is purposeful and goal-oriented (Mosak & Maniaci, 1999). Humans are social beings and strive to obtain a sense of belonging within the community that they are a part of. Simply put, children are social beings and their behavior is purposeful in their quest to belong. Children engage in goals of behavior from either an encouraged or discouraged space (Dreikurs, 1982). When children feel encouraged, they tend to meet their goals of behavior in health-enhancing, pro-social ways (cooperative play, healthy relationships, appropriate boundaries, etc.). When children feel discouraged, they tend to meet their goals of behavior in maladaptive, anti-social ways (bullying, whining/complaining, reckless risk taking, etc.).

It is important to reiterate that all behavior is meaningful and purposeful. Children do not act out because they are scheming, children act from either an encouraged or discouraged stance to obtain a very specific goal. Children's behavior, much like adult behavior, is goal directed- it has a purpose.

## Goals of Behavior are outlined in the chart on page 5.

We will now address three ways you can support a child to redirect his or her behavior. Before you engage in redirection it is important to recognize your own reactions to your child. In what ways do you anticipate your child's behaviors? In what way does your child anticipate your reactions? What do you as the parent do most often in response to misbehavior? Does it work? The following are three strategies to redirect behavior and promote a more positive parenting experience.

### Family Meetings

Schedule a family meeting to redirect behavior in a more positive, pro-social manner. A family meeting gives every mem-

ber of the family a chance to express him or herself freely. Scheduling regular meetings provides an opportunity for you to say in the heat of the moment- "I understand that you feel angry and unheard right now. We have a family meeting tonight where we can all express our concerns, but right now I need you to...." Children often act out from a power stance because they feel unheard. The regular scheduling of family council meetings provides an opportunity to express concerns and provide a place where all can be heard. Adults need to be prepared to listen. Listening does not mean you give in.

### Fun Time

Fun may seem counter-intuitive, but increasing your fun time as a family can be a useful strategy. Unfortunately, families are often overscheduled and so busy that fun is a luxury, not a habit. By regularly scheduling fun, you may avoid giving reinforcing attention for negative behavior by providing opportunity for positive attention.

### Break it Down

In situations when you are experiencing resistance, ask yourself two important questions: Am I expecting too much? Often as parents, we expect that our children should be able to remember to do simple things like household chores; however, children are often forgetful. So, how might you break the task into small steps to foster success, rather than failure? For example, a child looking at a room full of toys that need to be picked up may feel overwhelmed and may evoke a withdrawal response. How might you break that task down? Can you divide the room in half? Quarters? You may actually create a learning moment, as well as make an overwhelming task much more fun. Developing encouraged behavior to meet your child's goals takes time and patience. In some cases it may require a change in fundamental views of life, attitudes toward other people, as well as feelings about self and, perhaps, the child. It may seem unnatural at first and may not work right away; however, if you are able to be consistent the result will be children who are cooperative, contribute, and have a sense of belonging.

### Sources Cited:

Dreikurs, R., Grunwald, B., & Pepper, F. (1982). *Maintaining Sanity in the Classroom, Classroom Management Techniques*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Mosak, H. & Maniaci, M. (1999). *A Primer of Adlerian Psychology*. New York, NY: Routledge



<b><u>Goal of Behavior:</u></b>	<b>ENCOURAGED Child's Behavior</b>	<b>DISCOURAGED Child's Behavior:</b>	<b>If the Adult Feels:</b>	<b>Adult tends to React by:</b>	<b>And if the Child's Re- sponse is:</b>	<b>Belief behind Child's Behavior is:</b>
<b>Contact</b>	Contributing Cooperating Collaborating	Undue Attention Seeking (keep others busy or bids to get spe- cial services) Whining Complaining Demanding	Annoyed Guilty Irritated Worried	Reminding Coaxing Doing things for child that he/she are capable of doing for self	Stops behavior temporarily; later starts another dis- turbing behav- ior	I belong only when I'm being noticed. I'm only important when I'm keeping you occu- pied.
<b>Power</b>	Independence Individuating Promoting	Rebellion Winning power struggles (to be the boss) <i>Example: break- ing curfew,</i>	Anger Provoked Challenged Threatened Defeated	Fighting Giving In Wanting to be right- engage in Power Struggle	Intensifies behavior Defiant Com- pliance Feels s/he has "won" when adults are upset	I only belong when I'm boss or proving no one can boss me
<b>Protection</b>	Assertiveness Expressiveness Advocating for Self	Revenge Retaliation (to get even) <i>Example: cyber bullying, sabotag- ing</i>	Hurt Disappointed Disbelief Disgust	Retaliating- "Grounding" Taking behav- ior personally	Retaliates, Hurts oth- ers/self/ prop- erty Behavior Escalates	I don't believe I belong, so I'll hurt others as I feel hurt. I can't be liked/ loved.
<b>Withdrawal</b>	Centering Renewal Re-charging Taking time for self-care, relax	Assumed Inade- quacy Unusual Avoid- ance ("I give up- leave me alone") <i>Example: socially intimidating dress or self-presentation</i>	Despair Hopelessness Helpless Inadequate	Giving Up Doing For Over-helping Showing Dis- couragement	Retreats fur- ther Passive No Improve- ment No Response	I don't believe I can belong, so I'll con- vince others not to ex- pect any- thing from me. I am helpless.
<b>Challenge</b>	Skill Building Reasonable Risk Taking Seek Adventures/ new Experiences	Thrill Seeking Risk Taking Substance Abuse Risky Sexual Be- haviors Stealing	Fearful Concerned for Safety Nervous	Control Ac- tivities Lecture about Safety Restrict Envi- ronment	Breaks Rules  Takes more Reckless risks	I'm impor- tant and belong only when I'm on the edge and winning.



...College is possible for all Montana students



# Seeing the Value in Elementary Career Lessons

By Chad Kinnett, Elementary VP

**“....they  
thought college  
was where you  
went to play  
football ...”**



Let's be honest. Most elementary counselors who do routine guidance lessons in their schools love to talk about topics that they think 'hit home' with their students. Topics on bullying character, and personal-safety are sure to open up good classroom discussions. We also love talking about anything that has to do with feelings or social skills. We've all thought that these are the things that counselors are supposed to be defined by and teach on, right?

Well, of course they are. But if we limit our scope of topics to only those in the Personal-Social domain, we are missing out on an incredible opportunity to educate and connect with our students in a whole new way.

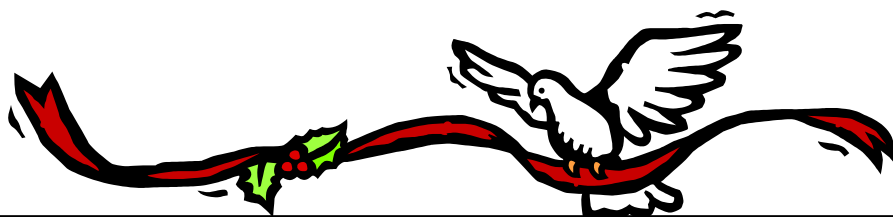
This revelation came to me about five years ago. I had been aware that there were two other domains in the ASCA national model that we as school counselors should have on our radar. I could see the importance of touching on the academic component of the model, but I thought that

teaching the career stuff could go on the back-burner, mostly because that seemed like such a far-off subject matter, and talking about bullying and friendship skills seemed so much more important!

I started to feel convicted about this, so I made a goal to try and plug at least two career-oriented lessons into my yearly guidance plan. As I inquired and presented, I soon realized that my students had very little understanding of the years ahead and all the possibilities that were out there. I discovered that many of them had no concept of what lied beyond elementary school, let alone thinking about a career path. When I spoke to them about college, I found out that they thought college was where you went to play football. What floored me the most, however, was that students in 4th and 5th grade had already formed the opinion that they were going to drop-out of high school, just like older siblings or their parents had (even if

they didn't completely understand what that meant). This is when the importance of talking about their future really hit me.

Needless to say, I've since committed more time in my schedule and attempted to 'beef-up' my guidance lessons on this topic. I feel this change in my focus has not only benefitted my students, it's also helped make me a more well-rounded school counselor. It's made my lessons more applicable to my students as I can connect subject matters in both the Personal-Social and Academic domains with a relevance to their future. I now look forward each year to covering this topic with my students. And maybe more than anything, helping a child to see the amazing possibilities of their future is truly rewarding, and certainly, at least in my mind, is a topic that 'hits home.'



# 2013 MSCA Spring Conference

## School Counseling Magic:

## Tricks of Our Trade

# Logo Design Contest



### Calling All Artists: We Need A Logo!

You are invited to design a logo for the 2013 MSCA Spring Conference: School Counseling Magic: Tricks of Our Trade.

Winners will be recognized in our MSCA Newsletter and  
will receive: 1st Place—\$100 2nd Place—\$50 3rd Place—\$25

#### Logo Contest Rules

1. All entries must be submitted on blank white paper measuring 11" wide x 8 1/2" high (landscape) along with an entry form taped to the back.
2. Any Montana student in grades 9-12 is eligible to participate.
3. Entries should be in color but the winning entry may be used in both color and black & white, and judges will be asked to take that into consideration. Artwork can be hand drawn or computer generated.
4. Incorporating the theme: School Counseling Magic: Tricks of Our Trade is important.
5. MSCA's mission is to promote excellence in professional school counseling in Montana. Visit our website at [www.mtschoolcounselor.org](http://www.mtschoolcounselor.org) to learn more about us.
6. Entries should be mailed to: Jodi Morgan, Thompson Falls High School  
PO Box 129  
Thompson Falls, MT 59873
7. Entries must be postmarked by **Friday, January 4, 2013**. Winners will be notified by mail.

### MSCA Logo Design Contest Entry Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I grant permission to the Montana School Counselor Association to exhibit and reproduce my poster/logo for the contest. Permission is also granted to make any modifications necessary for reproduction of my poster/logo. I understand that all posters/logos will become the property of the Montana School Counselor Association.

Signature (required): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Required if entry is submitted by any student under the age of 18

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# MSCA Member Spotlight

By Teresa Majerus, Middle School VP

As a result of being an MSCA board member, I have been fortunate to meet many Professional School Counselors across the state of Montana. I love this part about the job and love visiting with other Counselors hearing about how they chose this profession (or how it chose them). Each one is passionate about their job, and shares a strong desire to make a positive impact on the lives of children. Thus being said, I have decided to begin a Counselor spotlight in my section of the newsletter. Each newsletter, I will randomly choose a location on the map and then find out what MSCA member works in that school. With the help of Laura and her number system, we will narrow our pick to one individual!



## Spotlight on ... RHONDA HINMAN

By Teresa Majerus, Middle School VP

So, for this newsletter the spotlight is on **Rhonda Hinman**, the Professional School Counselor from Polson Middle School. Rhonda received her degree from the University of Montana with an undergraduate degree from Carroll College. She taught math for three years in Eureka and has been at Polson Middle School for the past 21 years.

Rhonda says; "I believe God has placed me in a Middle School setting for a reason, as I just seems to gel with Middle School age students. As Counselors, sometimes we are a mom, dad, administrator, a guardian, future predictor and cheerleader but most importantly we are the safety support for staff and students."

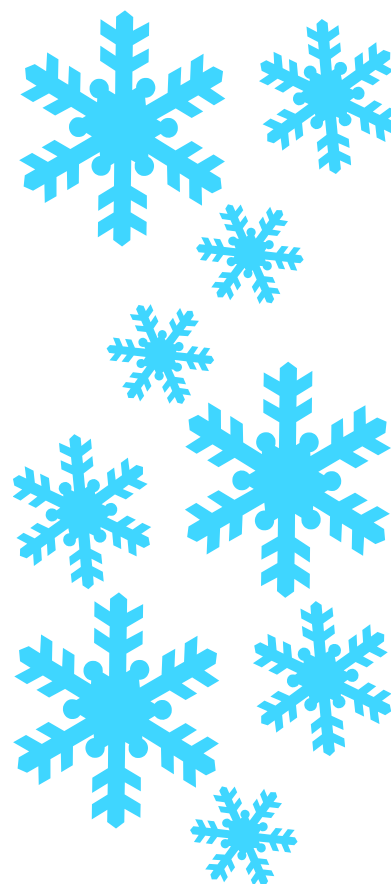
As every Counselor knows we must have a way to relax. Rhonda lives on a ranch and enjoys her chickens, calves and walking. She

also has a large extended family and goes to many sporting events.

Rhonda states "School Counseling is a wonderful job! I am honestly very happy that I chose this profession. I have obtained happiness and a sense of pride along the journey."

Thanks to Rhonda for being my first pick for the Counselor Spotlight. I hope you have enjoyed getting to know a little more about one of many very special School Counselors in the great state of Montana!

*Editor's Note: Rhonda is a current member of MSCA and has been a member of MSCA for a number of years. In addition, Rhonda has been an active participant in the annual MSCA Spring Conference in Bozeman. We apologize for not having a photo of Rhonda for this publication.*





# Engage the Brain with ... Movement?

By Chelsea McCann, High School VP

The brain: The most complicated and unknown organ in our bodies. We go through our days (and nights) with it humming and ticking away, whether we ask it to or not. As school counselors, we see students who are using their brain every day, and students who appear to be unable to separate theirs from their iPhone.

Recently, I've been a part of a book study, reading ***Brain Rules***, by John Medina. The chapter that captured my attention the most discussed the impact of exercise on the brain. The question is, "Is there a link between mental alertness and exercise?" The answer is a unanimous: Yes. This may be old news to some, and very enlightening to others. As I read through the chapter, the following three concepts resonated with me:

## 1.) We were **not** meant to sit.

Our ancestors were used walking up to 12 miles per day (pg. 23). On any given workday, thanks to computers and our reliance on them for our jobs, we spend most of our time sedentary. Our students? Also spend close to 8 hours a day sitting in a classroom. Incorporating movement into work/school days is not just smart, it's necessary for our minds to function effectively.

## 2.) Recess **multiple times a day.**

Medina cites Dr. Antronette Yancey, who describes a real world test, "They took time away from academic subjects for physical education ... and found that, across the board, [physical education] did not hurt the kids' performance on the academic tests. ...[When] trained teachers provided the physical education, the children actually did better

on language, reading and the basic battery of tests." (pg. 25) If school districts take away recess (many have, to focus on classroom learning) our students are not necessarily benefitting. Allowing time for movement is an absolutely vital to the learning process, for students and adults alike.

## 3.) To **improve your thinking skills, move!**

Medina mentions studies have shown that exercisers outperform couch potatoes in tests that measure long term memory, reasoning, problem solving, attention, and fluid-intelligence tasks. Ultimately, exercise improves a wide variety of abilities that are treasured in the classroom and at work.

I believe that in order for us to be effective counselors, we need to move, and

often! In order for our minds to be able to work at the pace that is required in our day to day demands, being sure that we are taking care of ourselves is of utmost importance. Visit this link for ideas on how to incorporate exercise in the office: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/office-exercise/SM00115>

I hope this brief overview of a chapter from ***Brain Rules*** by John Medina gives you a taste that inspires you to not only incorporate movement into your everyday, but to also read the rest of his book. The amount of helpful information that is incorporated on the "12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School," is knowledge that any counselor, teacher, or administrator can pass on to students, parents, and loved ones. Read it...your brain will thank you!

## Brains Cont. from P. 3

dispositions. Some school systems have changed their days to an 8:30 a.m. start time. They have experienced decreased absences, increased grades, fewer school nurse visits and fewer suspensions. The students reported feeling more alert and happy.

Since the adolescent brain is a work in progress and have not mastered their executive functions we need to collaborate with teachers on integrated lessons focusing on develop-

ing study skills, scheduling, organizing and setting goals.

According to the authors, counselors can collaborate with teachers about ways to be proactive in classroom management techniques. Knowing the neural pathways aren't fully constructed can help when a teacher is correcting inappropriate behavior in a classroom. Rather than focusing the spotlight on the teen who is acting out in front of 25-30 classmates, a teacher can

talk with that student outside of class, thus experiencing less resistance. Teachers who are helping students develop executive skills of adolescents have reported they write homework on the board, say it aloud, ask students to write it in their agendas and (if available) post the homework on the school's Web site. These teachers see more positive academic results, and their students indicate that these classes are easier to manage because they are aware of the

expectations and feel more confident in their ability to manage the workload.

Counselors can inform parents about the specific developmental transformations that will help them to: depersonalize their teenagers' reactions; understand adolescent behavior; develop strategies to better communicate with their teens; realize the importance of just listening; and be involved parents without being overbearing.



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The MSCA Newsletter, "Making a Difference" is published three times annually as a service to our members (Sept 15, Dec 15, Mar 15). All issues are sent to members electronically. Board members, except for Treasurer and Secretary, submit articles of interest related to their level of representation. We welcome articles of interest from members or other educational professionals who would like to share information (due 30 days prior to publication). We encourage submissions be written in a friendly, informative, and practical style rather than technical or academic. Articles must be original and references are to be used when appropriate rather than footnotes. Articles must meet the mission of MSCA. No compensation is given for submitted articles. All articles are available on the MSCA website: [www.mtschoolcounselor.org](http://www.mtschoolcounselor.org).

Advertisements may be submitted according to guidelines found on the website. (Full P. 1X=\$150, 1/2 P. 1X=\$125, 1/4 P. 1X=\$75, 1/2 Column 1X=\$50; see additional options). We reserve the right to edit copy or reject advertisements that do not meet the mission of MSCA.

**Disclaimer:** Information printed in "Making a Difference" does not represent an official MSCA policy or position, and the acceptance of advertising does not constitute an endorsement or approval by MSCA of any advertised service or product.

**Submit articles and inquiries to:** Laura Simpson, [lsimpsonpchs@gmail.com](mailto:lsimpsonpchs@gmail.com) or call 406-846-2757 ext. 38