



# The Importance of Policy Research and Evaluation for International School-Based Counseling

COE Research Conversation

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# Presentation Overview

1. This could be an auspicious time for school-based counselors.
2. There is a significant role for program evaluation and policy research.
3. A new school-based counseling evaluation framework now exists to support evaluation work.
4. There are a number of international initiatives working to promote school-based counseling.



Pre-pandemic there were over 90 countries seriously considering the implementation of school-based counseling.



School counselors in the US have historically struggled to gain a foothold in schools.



# Reasons

- Role Ambiguity
- School principal deployment of school counselors
- Lack of resources
- Lack of understanding/acceptance regarding the importance of mental health support for children

# Who Took “Counseling” out of the Role of Professional School Counselors in the United States?

Lambie, G. W., Haugen, J. S., Borland, J. R., Campbell, L. O. (2019) *Journal of School-Based Counseling Policy & Evaluation*, 1(3), 51-61.



This time could be different.



The evidence and the argument.



Numerous national and  
international studies.

Use databases or surveys.

Show increases in mental health problems from 2019 to 2020 or 2019 to 2021.

# Mental health issues that cut across almost all studies:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Suicide
- Trauma

# Protecting Youth Mental Health The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory

<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-youth-mental-health-advisory.pdf> (hhs.gov)



- The insufficient numbers of school counselors nationally makes it difficult to adequately address the mental health needs of K-12 students.
- The school counselor to student ratio should be 1:250 in each school.

# Supporting Child and Student Social, Emotional, Behavioral, and Mental Health Needs

<https://www2.ed.gov/documents/students/supporting-child-student-social-emotional-behavioral-mental-health.pdf>

Significant expansion of the number of school counselors across the U.S.



Removal of administrative tasks from the school counselor workload.

Maintain counselor to student ratios at  
1:250 for all school counselors.

# Why program evaluation?


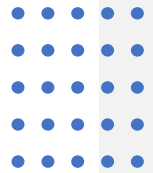
- To improve programs and services  
(formative evaluation)
- For program effectiveness and accountability  
(summative evaluation)




# **PROGRAM EVALUATION IN SCHOOL COUNSELING**

IMPROVING COMPREHENSIVE AND  
DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS

**MICHAEL S. TREVISAN  
AND JOHN C. CAREY**



# An Evaluation Framework for School Counselors



# Benefits of the Evaluation Framework

Benefit 1

Meets the professional program evaluation standards (Yarborough et al., 2010) widely accepted by the program evaluation enterprise.



Benefit 2

Incorporates the use of  
qualitative methods.

# Benefit 3

Includes formative evaluation as  
a valued purpose.

# Benefit 4

Embraces stakeholder  
engagement.

# Benefit 5

Fosters impetus and process for  
culturally-responsive evaluation.



# Two Limitations

- Lack of Time
- Lack of Training

# Pillars of the Framework

# Pillar 1

Carol Weiss (1998)

# Pillar 2

Trevisan and Carey (2020)

# Pillar 3

Lambie, et al. (2019)



# Policy Research

John C. Carey · Belinda Harris  
Sang Min Lee · Oyaziwo Aluede *Editors*

# International Handbook for Policy Research on School- Based Counseling

 Springer

International Society of Policy  
Research and Evaluation for  
School-based Counseling  
(ISPRES)



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# ISPRES SC Projects



- Develop evaluation model for school counselors and federal government (Korea)
- Trauma Informed Education (TIE) for School Counselors (Nigeria)
- Develop policy briefs (India)

With school-based counselors conducting effective program evaluation and strategic policy research school-based counselors could be poised to gain that elusive foothold in schools as an essential professional.

Thank you!

# References

- (1) Lambie, G. W., Haugen, J. S., Borland, J. R., Campbell, L. O. (2019) Who took “counseling” out of the role of professional school counselors in the United States? *Journal of School-Based Counseling Policy & Evaluation*, 1(3), 51-61.
- (2) Trevisan, M. S. & Carey, J. C. (2020). *Program evaluation in school counseling: Improving comprehensive and developmental programs*. New York, NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- (3) Weiss, C. H. (1998). Have we learned anything new about the use of evaluation? *American Journal of Evaluation*, 19(1), 21-33.
- (4) Yarbrough, D. B., Shulha, L. M., Hopson, R. K., & Caruthers, F. a. (2010). *The program evaluation standards: A guide for evaluators and evaluation users* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.