

Counseling interview paper

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CounselorInterviewPaperJessica Peacock I plan on going into the School Counseling field, so for my interview I went to a long timefamilyfriend Kay Weems. Kay is a school counselor currently at Madison Station Elementary, but she has 19 years of experience at different levels of education in counseling and in different environments as well. She also was an elementaryteacherfor 10 years prior to becoming a school counselor. Kay went to school at Mississippi State and received a bachelor’s degree in elementary education with a minor in special education. She went on to obtain her masters degree in special education.

After school she taught at the elementary level for ten years so she has plenty of experience with children ages 5-11. When she had her only daughter Aubrey, she decided to get her master’s certificate for guidance counseling and then went back to work as a guidance counselor. This year is her first year counseling at the elementary level, but previous years she did high school two years and middle school 16 years in several different environments. When I asked Kay’s perspective on the purpose of the school counseling profession she said that she feels as though she makes an impact on children’s lives every day.

Her goal is to help children achieveacademic, personal, as well as social success in the schoolenvironment. She provides individual counseling to students, as well as referrals for students to community support or for students that may need additional help in the classroom or academic testing. When I asked her about the demands of her job, she took a second to think about it, I imagine situations running through her head when she struggled

with a child or a child's family. She admitted that working with a child's parent can be very difficult.

She explained parent's often times want to believe their child is perfect and perfectly happy, so when a counselor has to sit down parents and inform them something is wrong with their child many times the response from parents isn't pleasant. Another struggle was dealing with abused children; she described that as "gut-wrenching". Often times it is hard for her to leave stuff like that at work. She said that the best way to cope with those situations is to know that no matter what, every single day you have done your very best to get that child out of the bad situation that they are in.

Before I interviewed Kay, I asked her about working with culturally diverse, and/or underrepresented children and she said that in her 19 years of counseling she has worked an abundance of both of these groups. She said that each time you work with a child of a culture that you are not extremely familiar with, you often times learn something new. It is a learning process she said. But when I mentioned underrepresented children she started to tell me about a group of kids that had experienced a very tragic trauma before them.

She told me of a Friday she found out she would be sent to Pearl High School on the next Monday to counsel to kids the next school day after the first school shooting in America. She explained that she had no idea what to tell these children, or how to answer their question, "Will the killer show up again at school with a gun?" These children had lost their friends and peers right before their eyes. She did her best and learned a lot about counseling children who have experienced extreme trauma.

She made an effort to revisit these children that had been affected through a year period and counsel them. She said often times when situations like this happen, the children that witnessed these murders of their friends in their own school get left without the proper help they need. When I asked Kay about ethics in her job, she said it really comes down to having the best interest of the students at all time. It is important to know your job description and be able to explain it to parents as well as to a child that may not understand in adult language what you do.

Always, let your students know limitations up front as well as the counselor-student relationship. We talked about the staff structure, but Kay, like most school counselors, is the only one at her school. She works close with teachers, office staff, and the school nurse as well. She said she personally likes being the only counselor in her setting. I do know that at many high schools in the regional area there are as many as four school counselors in one school. I asked Kay about her knowledge of current global issues, and she only mentioned cyber bullying.

She said that there are so many problems with kids being bullied over the internet out of school and it is causing problems inside the school. She said that this has definitely become more prominent in the past five years and fears how much worse it can get. She didn't mention any global issues other than that though. Kay has improved many more lives than she has told me about but what she has told me has amazed me. She has a love for helping children and that is such a gift.

When I look at the profession I think that the rewards outweigh the struggles and I am excited to see what this career path has for me in life. I have always

wanted to work in the school district just as my mom does. While talking with Kay I could easily see the passion she had for this career, it seems as though she wakes up liking to go to work unlike many people in the world today. I have learned a lot talking to her and would be interested in sitting in with her one day while she does her daily work as a school counselor.