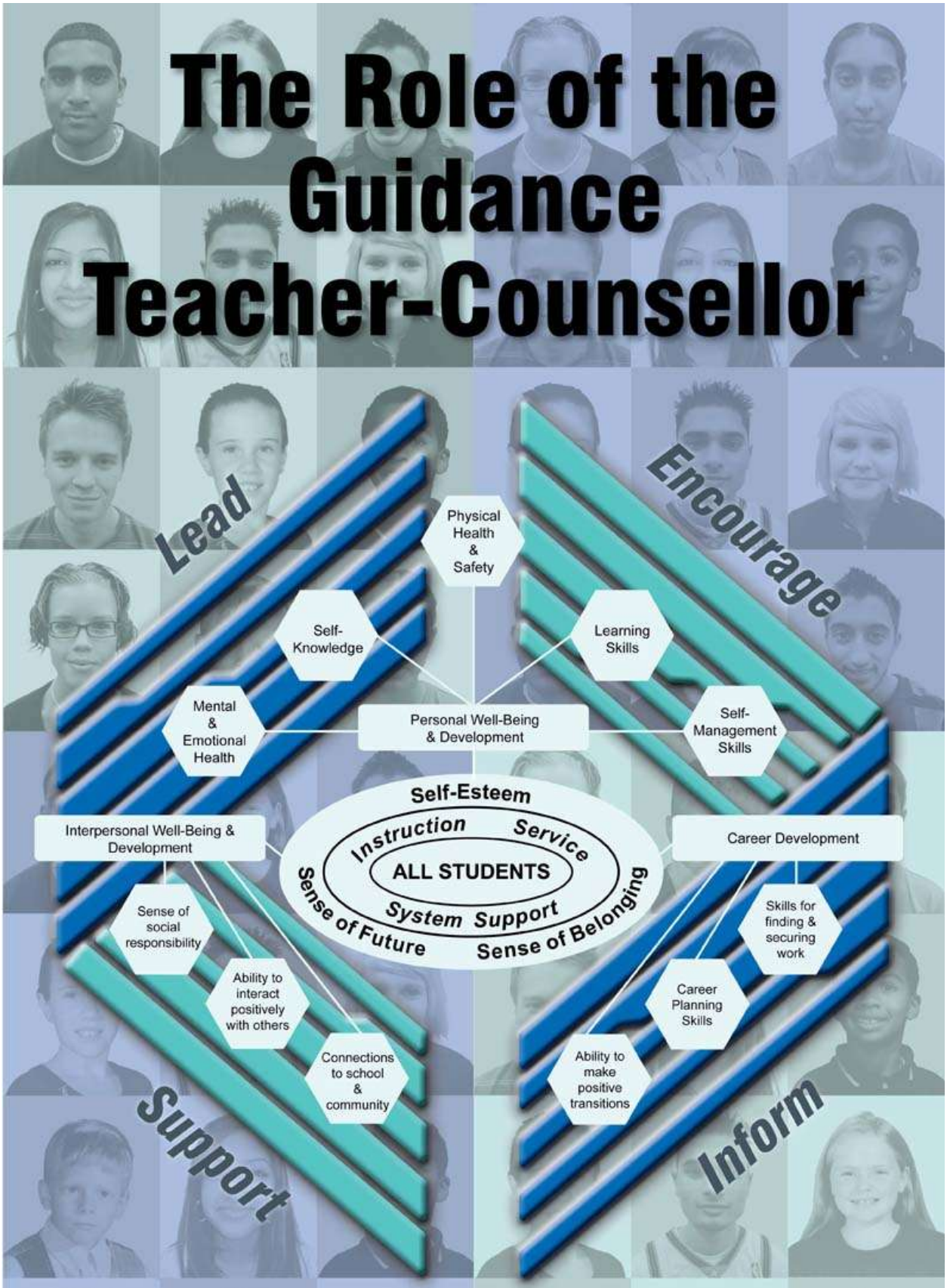
The Role of the Guidance Teacher-Counsellor



The role of the Guidance Leader (those in positions of responsibility, consultative roles, etc.) is to

LEAD, ENCOURAGE, INFORM and SUPPORT

Guidance and Career Educators in providing effective programs and services for all students

Ontario School Counsellors' Association
L'Association des conseillers en orientation de l'Ontario

Role of the Guidance Counsellor

Mission

Mission of the Guidance Counsellor: Support and promote students' well-being and continuous growth in three areas: personal (student) development, interpersonal development, career development in order to help them develop resilience and realize their potential (success) as individuals and as valuable members of society. (These areas of development are reflected in the three areas of development of Choices into Action and are consistent with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which suggests that readiness for development at higher levels is dependent on full development at lower levels. This is consistent with the work of Eric Erikson, Bonnie Benard (resilience), Richard Sagor (children likely to succeed).

Personal Well-being and Development

- Physical health and safety
- Mental and emotional health
- Self knowledge and esteem
    - Feelings of competence, usefulness, potency
- Sense of future
    - Goal-setting
- Self-management skills
    - Independence and autonomy
- Learning skills
    - Problem solving

Interpersonal Well-being and Development

- Sense of belonging
- Connection to school community
- Interact positively with others
    - Conflict resolution
- Sense of social responsibility

Career Development

- Positive transitions from elementary to secondary school and from secondary school to a variety of post-secondary destinations, including work, apprenticeship, college, university
- Career planning knowledge and skills
    - Who am I? (self assessment -- personal characteristics: interests, skills, personality, values, etc.)
    - What's out there? (variety of options for: fields of work and occupations, education and training)
    - What should I choose? (decision-making, goal-setting)
    - How can I get there? (planning skills)
- Skills for finding and securing work/employment
    - Resume, interview, work-search, etc.

Realizing the Mission

The Guidance Counsellor seeks to realize this mission through three different kinds of activities: Instruction, service, and system support activities.

Instruction

- Curriculum
    - Guidance
    - Other subject areas
- Other vehicles
    - Assemblies
    - Small groups
    - Workshops
    - Seminars
    - Field trips
    - Community network

Service

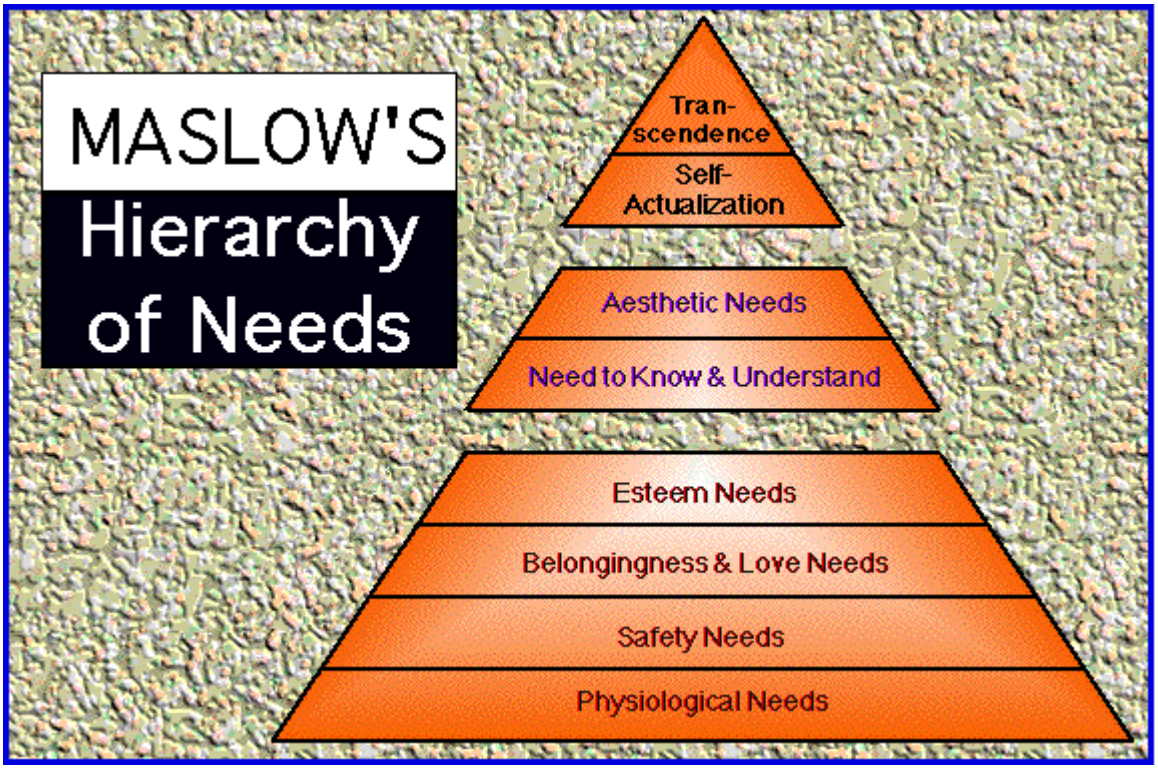
- Counselling
    - Small group
    - Individual
- Referrals
    - Community service providers
    - School board supports

System Support

- Liaising with and/or between other subject teachers, administration, community, parents
- Serving on school committees
- Providing curriculum support for other subject areas
- Communication and marketing
- Consultation (e.g. timetabling, school structure, etc.)
- Working with a variety of student and staff teams to establish and maintain appropriate school culture/environment

Guidance Leaders

Guidance leaders play an important, additional role, a role characterized by activities through which they Lead, Encourage, Inform, and Support staff members in their efforts to realize the mission of the Guidance Counsellor.



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Written by: William G. Huitt
Last modified: February 2004

Citation: Huitt, W. (2004). Maslow's hierarchy of needs. *Educational Psychology Interactive*. Valdosta, GA: Valdosta State University. Retrieved [date] from, http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/col/regsys/maslow.html.

Return to: | Courses | Home |

Abraham Maslow (1954) attempted to synthesize a large body of research related to human motivation. Prior to Maslow, researchers generally focused separately on such factors as biology, achievement, or power to explain what energizes, directs, and sustains human behavior. Maslow posited a hierarchy of human needs based on two groupings: deficiency needs and growth needs. Within the deficiency needs, each lower need must be met before moving to the next higher level. Once each of these needs has been satisfied, if at some future time a deficiency is detected, the individual will act to remove the deficiency. The first four levels are:

1) Physiological: hunger, thirst, bodily comforts, etc.;

2) Safety/security: out of danger;

3) Belonginess and Love: affiliate with others, be accepted; and

4) Esteem: to achieve, be competent, gain approval and recognition.

According to Maslow, an individual is ready to act upon the growth needs if and only if the deficiency needs are met. Maslow's initial conceptualization included only one growth need--self-actualization. Self-actualized people are characterized by: 1) being problem-focused; 2) incorporating an ongoing freshness of appreciation of life; 3) a concern about personal growth; and 4) the ability to have peak experiences. Maslow later differentiated the growth need of self-actualization, specifically naming two lower-level growth needs prior to general level of self-actualization (Maslow & Lowery, 1998) and one beyond that level (Maslow, 1971). They are:

5) Cognitive: to know, to understand, and explore;

6) Aesthetic: symmetry, order, and beauty;

7) Self-actualization: to find self-fulfillment and realize one's potential; and

8) Self-transcendence: to connect to something beyond the ego or to help others find self-fulfillment and realize their potential.

Maslow's basic position is that as one becomes more self-actualized and self-transcendent, one becomes more wise (develops wisdom) and automatically knows what to do in a wide variety of situations. Daniels (2001) suggests that Maslow's ultimate conclusion that the highest levels of self-actualization are transcendent in their nature may be one of his most important contributions to the study of human behavior and motivation.

Norwood (1999) proposes that Maslow's hierarchy can be used to describe the kinds of information that individual's seek at different levels. For example, individuals at the lowest level seek **coping information** in order to meet their basic needs. Information that is not directly connected to helping a person meet his or her needs in a very short time span is simply left unattended. Individuals at the safety level need **helping information**. They seek to be assisted in seeing how they can be safe and secure. **Enlightening information** is sought by individuals seeking to meet their belongingness needs. Quite often this can be found in books or other materials on relationship development. **Empowering information** is sought by people at the esteem level. They are looking for information on how their ego can be developed. Finally, people in the growth levels of cogntive, aesthetic, and self-actualization seek **edifying information**. While Norwood does not specifically address the level of transcendence, I believe it safe to say that individuals at this stage would seek information on how to connect to something beyond themselves or to how others could be edified.

Maslow published his first conceptualization of his theory over 50 years ago (Maslow, 1943) and it has since become one of the most popular and often cited theories of human motivation. An interesting phenomenon related to Maslow's work is that in spite of a lack of evidence to support his hierarchy, it enjoys wide acceptance (Wahba & Bridgewell, 1976; Soper, Milford & Rosenthal, 1995).

The few major studies that have been completed on the hierarchy seem to support the proposals of William James (1892/1962) and Mathes (1981) that there are three levels of

human needs. James hypothesized the levels of material (physiological, safety), social (belongingness, esteem), and spiritual. Mathes proposed the three levels were physiological, belonginess, and self-actualization; he considered security and self-esteem as unwarranted. Alderfer (1972) developed a comparable hierarchy with his ERG (existence, relatedness, and growth) theory. His approach modified Maslow's theory based on the work of Gordon Allport (1960, 1961) who incorporated concepts from systems theory into his work on personality.

At this point there is little agreement about the identification of basic human needs and how they are ordered. For example, Ryan & Deci (2000) also suggest three needs, although they are not necessarily arranged hierarchically: the need for autonomy, the need for competence, and the need for relatedness. Thompson, Grace and Cohen (2001) state the most important needs for children are connection, recognition, and power. Nohria, Lawrence, and Wilson (2001) provide evidence from a sociobiology theory of motivation that humans have four basic needs: (1) acquire objects and experiences; (2) bond with others in long-term relationships of mutual care and commitment; (3) learn and make sense of the world and of ourselves; and (4) to defend ourselves, our loved ones, beliefs and resources from harm. The Institute for Management Excellence (2001) suggests there are nine basic human needs: (1) security, (2) adventure, (3) freedom, (4) exchange, (5) power, (6) expansion, (7) acceptance, (8) community, and (9) expression.

Notice that bonding and relatedness are a component of every theory. However, there do not seem to be any others that are mentioned by all theorists. Franken (2001) suggests this lack of accord may be a result of different philosophies of researchers rather than differences among human beings. In addition, he reviews research that shows a person's explanatory or attributional style will modify the list of basic needs. Therefore, it seems appropriate to ask people what they want and how their needs could be met rather than relying on an unsupported theory. For example, Waitley (1996) advises having a person imagine what life would be like if time and money were not an object in a person's life. That is, what would the person do this week, this month, next month, if he or she had all the money and time needed to engage in the activities and were secure that both would be available again next year. With some follow-up questions to identify what is keeping the person from happening now, this open-ended approach is likely to identify the most important needs of the individual.

There is much work still to be done in this area before we can rely on a theory to be more informative than simply collecting and analyzing data. However, this body of research can be very important to parents, educators, administrators and others concerned with developing and using human potential. It provides an outline of some important issues that must be addressed if human beings are to achieve the levels of character and competencies necessary to be successful in the information age.

References

- Alderfer, C. (1972). *Existence, relatedness, & growth*. New York: Free Press.
- Allport, G. (1960). *Personality and social encounter: Selected essays*. New York: Beacon Press.
- Allport, G. (1961). *Pattern and growth in personality*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

- Daniels, M. (2001). *Maslows's concept of self-actualization*. Retrieved February 2004, from http://www.mdani.demon.co.uk/archive/MDMaslow.htm
- Franken, R. (2001). *Human motivation* (5th ed.).. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Institute for Management Excellence. (2001). The nine basic human needs. *Online Newsletter*. Retrieved February 2004, from http://www.itstime.com/print/jun97p.htm
- James, W. (1892/1962). *Psychology: Briefer course*. New York: Collier.
- Maslow, A. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review, 50*, 370-396. Retrieved June 2001, from http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Maslow/motivation.htm.
- Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper.
- Maslow, A. (1971). *The farther reaches of human nature*. New York: The Viking Press.
- Maslow, A., & Lowery, R. (Ed.). (1998). *Toward a psychology of being* (3rd ed.). New York: Wiley & Sons.
- Mathes, E. (1981, Fall). Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a guide for living. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 21*, 69-72.
- Nohria, N., Lawrence, P., & Wilson, E. (2001). *Driven: How human nature shapes our choices*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Norwood, G. (1999). Maslow's hierarchy of needs. *The Truth Vectors* (Part I). Retrieved May 2002, from http://www.deepermind.com/20maslow.htm
- Ryan, R., & Deci, E. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 68-78. Retrieved February 2004, from http://www.psych.rochester.edu/SDT/publications/documents/2000RyanDeciSDT.pdf.
- Soper, B., Milford, G., & Rosenthal, G. (1995). Belief when evidence does not support theory. *Psychology & Marketing, 12*(5), 415-422.
- Thompson, M., Grace, C., & Cohen, L. (2001). *Best friends, worst enemies: Understanding the social lives of children*. New York: Ballantine Books. http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0345438094/qid=1024322725/sr=2-1/ref=sr_2_1/103-0382559-6049463
- Wahba, A., & Bridgewell, L. (1976). Maslow reconsidered: A review of research on the need hierarchy theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 15*, 212-240.
- Waitley, D. (1996). *The new dynamics of goal setting: Flextactics for a fast-changing world*. New York: William Morrow.