Abstract

This article features a review of selected resources related to supervision of school counselors and school counselors-in-training during their internship. These resources are grouped by professional associations, needs of the supervisee, needs of the supervisor, and needs of the supervisory relationship. The resources presented are not meant to be exhaustive; rather, they are intended to provide a collection of focused and practical resources for practicing school counselors who provide supervision.

Supervising School Counselors and Interns: Resources for Site Supervisors

“Shazam!!! You’re a Clinical Supervisor,” describes the experience of many professional counselors when a counselor-in-training requests clinical supervision during his or her internship (Riordan & Kern, 1994, p. 259). Heath and Storm (1983) elaborated on these reactions by saying experienced counselors:

have reason to worry. At any time from early morning to late evening, they may be unexpectedly drafted to serve as supervisors. . . . The therapist summoned at such times is usually far from the nearest collection of readings on . . . supervision with no time for study, no opportunity for apprenticeship. (p. 36)

Though the magnitude of responsibilities associated with supervision of practicing counselors and counseling interns is daunting, the experiences in supervision are often enjoyable and rewarding (Riordan & Kern, 1994), and the opportunities to influence the development of a new colleague are profound (Magnuson, Norem, & Bradley, 2001). Supervisors are potentially the

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most critical element of optimal internship experiences that become the apex of a trainee’s course of study.

The importance of clinical supervision is recognized for counselors who work in community settings (Magnuson et al., 2001). For example, in most states, licensure as a professional counselor requires supervised post-academic experience ranging from 2000 to 3000 hours. Licensed professional counselors often continue to receive supervision throughout their professional lifespan (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004).

On the other hand, many entry-level school counselors complete master’s level requirements and are immediately expected to provide proficient school counseling services without the support of a clinical supervisor (Magnuson et al., 2001). The disparity would seem to suggest that school counselors need less sophisticated skills than their counterparts in community agencies. Indeed, competent school counselors recognize and meet multiple and diverse needs of children. They respond to crises. They design curriculum and facilitate career development. They are skillful consultants and advocates. They plan and implement comprehensive counseling programs. They assess the efficacy of those programs. They manage multiple roles and respond to diverse constituents. We contend that school counselors’ responsibilities are often broader in scope than those of their counterparts in community agencies. Thus, one could conclude that supervision for entry level school counselors is more important than for professional counselors in community settings.

Page, Pietrzak, and Sutton (2001) called attention to the limited number of school counselors who receive clinical supervision. Numerous authors have confirmed this deficit and identified benefits of school counselor supervision (e.g., Agnew, Vaught, Getz, & Fortune, 2000; Benshoff & Paisley, 1996; Crutchfield & Borders, 1997; DeAngelis-Peace & Sprinthall, 1998). Herlihy, Gray and McCollum (2003) suggested that the following factors may impede the practice of supervision for school counselors: (a) A perception may exist that school counselors do not have the same need for clinical supervision as do their mental health counterparts; (b) school counselors, themselves, do not see the need for clinical supervision; (c) many school counselors operate under vaguely defined counselors’ roles; and (d) most states do not mandate post-degree supervision of school counselors.

We further suggest that little formal support for the clinical supervision of school counselors exists at the national level in professional school counselor organizations (e.g., American School Counselor Association [ASCA]). The materials available on the ASCA website (www.schoolcounselor.org) include no clear statement regarding clinical supervision. Supervision is mentioned at three locations: (a) the professional interest network listing of a contact person, (b) Ethical Standards section A.4 addressing dual relationships, and (c)
Ethical Standards section A.11 addressing peer helping. Moreover, the recently published National Standards (ASCA, 2003) contain no reference to clinical supervision.

Therefore, many school counselors continue to work without clinical supervision that could clearly benefit them as professionals, the students they serve, the counseling programs they coordinate, and the profession of school counseling. Further, school counselors who provide supervision without education, training, and supervised experience may be practicing outside their areas of competence and are, thus, violating the ethical codes of ASCA and the American Counseling Association (Nelson & Johnson, 1999).

Contemporary emphasis on supervision as a specialized and distinct intervention has resulted in an abundance of related entries in the professional literature. However, counselors who supervise interns and entry-level school counselors may not be members of the associations that aggregate or disseminate the materials. Thus, this annotated bibliography has been compiled to identify resources for professional school counselors who supervise emerging school counselors and graduate students during their internship experiences.

The bibliographic entries are organized in four categories: (a) professional associations, (b) needs of the supervisees, (c) needs of the supervisor, and (d) needs of the supervisory relationship. The organizations, books, articles, and media resources reviewed are representative of many excellent resources that are available to inform the practice of counselor supervision. Although this list is not meant to be exhaustive, the resources that seem most practical are presented.

Professional Associations
Association for Counselor Education and Supervision
The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) is a division of the American Counseling Association (ACA). The organization was founded in 1952, and its primary emphasis has been to promote quality education and supervision of counselors. ACES publishes an online newsletter, the Spectrum, and a journal, Counselor Education and Supervision, which are excellent resources for supervisors in all environments. ACES adopted the Ethical Guidelines for Counseling Supervisors (1993), available on the Internet at http://www.acesonline.net, accessible with the ACES Documents icon.

National Board for Certified Counselors
In collaboration with ACES, the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) developed a specialty credential for counselor supervisors, the Approved Clinical Supervisor (ACS). Achievement of the ACS documents education, knowledge, skills, and competencies deemed appropriate for counselors who provide supervision (NBCC, n. d.). The requirements for the supervisor credential
are useful guidelines for persons desiring training in supervision. Additionally, NBCC has specified ethical guidelines for ACSs, which are available on the Internet at http://www.cce-global.org/acs.htm. The ACS and NBCC (http://www.nbcc.org) web sites contain a variety of resources that may be useful to supervisors and their supervisees.

Needs of the Supervisee
School counselors, whether they have recently graduated or are completing internship requirements, are embarking on dynamic journeys of professional development. The feelings of excitement and challenge in graduate school are soon transformed to the stimulation of managing a school counseling program. The following resources highlight the needs of supervisees, and may enhance supervisors’ understanding of supervisees and their perspectives. Additionally, the materials may be shared with supervisees for continued professional development.

Themes in Counselor Development
(Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992)
This article presents the research findings from a qualitative study conducted with 100 counselors over the professional lifespan. Study participants ranged from pre-service counselors-in-training to professionals who had been in the field 30 years. The authors highlighted the developmental nature of professional identity and identified common themes that describe how the counselors, across the professional lifespan, reflected on themselves, their training, and their professional identity. This article has been required reading in the second author’s internship class. Her students regularly report a profound sense of relief and encouragement after reading the article and realizing that they have a great deal in common with other counselors. Routinely, the interns have identified with two specific themes reported by the researchers: (a) that their development was influenced by multiple sources (e.g., supervisors, mentors, professors) that were experienced in both unique and common ways, and (b) that interpersonal encounters were more influential than impersonal data.

A Profile of Lousy Supervision: Experienced Counselors’ Perspectives
(Magnuson, Wilcoxon, & Norem, 2000a)
These authors conducted qualitative interviews with experienced counselors in order to explicate practices associated with ineffective supervision. Their analysis of the data resulted in six “overarching principles of lousy supervision” (p. 193) with illustrations within spheres of the following areas: (a) organization/administration, (b) technical/cognitive, and (c) relational/affective.

The authors suggested that lousy supervisors are (a) unbalanced, (b) developmentally inappropriate, (c) intolerant of differences, (d) poor models, (e) untrained, and (f) professionally apathetic. For example, unbalanced supervisors may fail to balance corrective feedback with affirming feedback. They may be...
extremely rigid or so unstructured that supervisees have no boundaries on which to rely. Developmentally inappropriate supervisors neglect the dynamic and changing needs of their supervisees. Supervisors who are intolerant of differences may impose their approaches to counseling on supervisees without respecting supervisees’ theoretical orientation. Poor models engage in unethical or unprofessional behavior; an example from the data included violation of supervisor-supervisee boundaries. Untrained supervisors also demonstrate poor modeling when they fail to recognize their own limitations or inadequate preparation to supervise. Apathy may be associated with laziness. These supervisors were described as “not committed to the profession [and] not committed to the growth of the supervisee, or more importantly, to the future clients” (p. 196).

Clinical Supervision of Prelicensed Counselors: Recommendations for Consideration and Practice (Magnuson, Norem, & Wilcoxon, 2000b)

Although this article targeted supervisors of counselors who have received their master’s degrees, the step-by-step guidelines are also relevant to supervisors who work with master’s level interns. The authors’ recommended preparatory activities to obtain appropriate credentials, to articulate a philosophy of supervision, to craft professional disclosure statements, and to attend to risk management strategies. The authors also detailed pragmatic suggestions for structuring initial meetings with potential supervisees, formalizing supervisory relationships, evaluating the process, and designing culmination activities.

Games People Play in Supervision (Kadushin, 1968)

This article offered a lighthearted approach to viewing counselor behavior within the supervision relationship. Set in the context of transactional analysis and game-playing, Kadushin categorized and explained potential “games” or behaviors initiated by supervisees in an attempt to manage the interactions with supervisors. This article may be useful to supervisees and supervisors alike as each may view and discuss their behaviors and interactions as attempts to get needs met rather than some kind of personal deficit.

Needs of the Supervisor

Becoming familiar with the demands of the supervision process can seem harrowing. The resources included in this section were selected to provide a range of resources from the practical to the theoretical.

Leading and Managing Your School Guidance Program Staff (Henderson & Gysbers, 1998)

This landmark text provided structure and guidance for leaders of school counseling programs. After emphasizing the importance, though absence, of sound leadership, the authors outlined appropriate preparation, qualities, roles, and responsibilities of school counseling program coordinators. They described
administrative, developmental, and clinical supervision, and suggested that supervision can enhance school counselors’ professionalism and competence.

The authors devoted one chapter to the practice of supervision. They introduced a basic supervisor knowledge base, addressed challenges, delineated supervisor skills, and identified qualities associated with effective supervision. They also provided practical procedures and guidelines for evaluation of school counselors’ performance.

*Answering the call: A manual for beginning supervisors* (Heath & Storm, 1983)

Although the authors wrote the article two decades ago and in the context of family therapy, their recommendations are relevant to contemporary beginning supervisors of school counselors. Heath and Storm offered recommendations for learning about and developing a conceptual framework for supervision. They also described a two-step preparation approach for supervisors-in-training. Practical guidelines for developing supervisory relationships, structuring supervision, and networking with other supervisors are included.

*Games Supervisors Play* (Hawthorne, 1975)

This author built on the earlier work of Kadushin (1968) and emphasized supervisor-initiated games. Readers are introduced to several games that supervisors may play to gain or manage their power. Hawthorne suggested possible motives that may lead supervisors to engage in this behavior and encouraged supervisors to examine their own supervisory style for relationship games inherent payoffs. Hawthorne offered pragmatic strategies for addressing game playing behavior in supervision.

*Handbook of Counseling Supervision* (Borders & Leddick, 1987)

This handbook was one of the pioneer guides for the practice of clinical supervision. Although it is nearly 15 years old, this concise and practical text continues to provide useful theory and procedural recommendations for supervising counselors. The authors included strategies for enacting supervision and forms for assessing supervisees’ skills and progress. They identified a variety of ethical and legal considerations such as dual relationships, vicarious liability, and evaluation. An illustration of a typical supervisory dilemma is included. The authors also addressed characteristics of beginning supervisors and provided forms for self-assessment and supervisee feedback. An additional supervisor evaluation tool assesses supervisors according to competencies established by ACES.

*Fundamentals of Clinical Supervision* (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004)

This comprehensive text includes an examination of supervisors’ roles, supervision models, theories related to
supervision, interventions for both individual and group supervision, and strategies for evaluation. The authors emphasized the importance of the supervisory relationship and offered strategies for strengthening working alliances with supervisees. Legal considerations include malpractice, duty to warn, and vicarious liability. The authors elaborated on ethical guidelines related to due process, informed consent, dual relationships, competence for supervisors and supervisees, confidentiality, and marketing. Many case illustrations were included in the legal and ethical considerations chapter. Bernard and Goodyear also shared a variety of instruments to assess various aspects of supervision.

A handbook accompanied the Bernard and Goodyear text. (Fall & Sutton, 2004). This practical supplement provided interactive exercises, supervision session transcripts, and sample forms. Application vignettes amplify content sections. A particularly helpful chapter provided guidelines for addressing difficult situations in supervision (e.g., conflict, dependence, anxiety, and noncompliance).

**Becoming an Effective Supervisor: A Workbook for Counselors and Psychotherapists** (Campbell, 2000)

Campbell's purpose in developing this text was to provide a concise, readable resource for counselors who had not received formal training in supervision. Her effort to condense and synthesize literature addressing clinical supervision resulted in an interactive workbook that augments information with guides for independent reflection. Models of supervision (i.e., Interpersonal Process Recall, isomorphism, interactional, and developmental) are reviewed and supported with activities designed to assist readers in examining their professional values and preferred orientations for counseling and supervision. Additionally, readers are invited to consider their level of professional development at various junctures of their preparation. The author also included a chapter addressing the effects of cultural differences between supervisors and supervisees and between counselors and clients. She offered strategies and language for introducing discussions of cultural differences and included items for self-examination in the exploration section.

**Counselor Supervision: Principles, Process, and Practice** (Bradley & Ladany, 2001)

Unique features of this edited text included supervision in contexts of specialization such as school and career counseling. Additional chapters focused on a multicultural framework for supervision, group supervision, evaluation, and advocacy. Various models of supervision and strategies for enacting supervision were also reviewed.

The chapter addressing supervision for school counselors featured group and dyadic models that had been successfully implemented. The authors recommended procedures and activities for supervising interns and practicing school counselors.
Learning to Think Like a Supervisor (Borders & Benshoff, 1999)

This 35-minute videotape is available from ACA member services (Order # 79201). The taped presentation featured discussions of supervisors’ roles, which are demonstrated during supervision sessions. An included workbook, used in conjunction with the videotape, extended understanding of these concepts. Viewers are introduced to Bernard’s Discrimination Model (1979) of counselor supervision, which featured three foci and three supervisor roles that were intended to aid supervisors in meeting the needs of supervisees.

Clinical Supervisor Training: An Interactive CD-Rom Training Program for the Helping Professions (Baltimore & Crutchfield, 2003)

This training program provided a solid introduction to supervision concepts and process. The authors presented a wealth of information to the user in this interactive training program, which may be used as a complement to formal instruction or as independent training experience. Strengths of this training program include its comprehensiveness and utility; however, readers need to be computer proficient to navigate the CD-Rom.

The program consists of a training manual and interactive CD-Rom that were designed to take readers through a developmental progression of supervisor training. The training program is divided into 16 modules or chapters that readers can view in sequence or as desired. Readers can view counseling and supervision scenarios, printed materials, references, and resources to gain an introductory understanding of the supervision process and its demands. Readers are first asked to assess their rationale for becoming a supervisor and are challenged to shift their view from a counseling to a supervisory perspective. Then users may proceed to a brief introduction to the definition and models of supervision, the initiation and maintenance of relationships, and the role of evaluation. Issues related to legal and ethical issues, diversity concerns, and the termination of the relationship were also addressed.

Needs of the Relationship

Collaborative working alliances between supervisors and supervisees are critical elements of satisfactory and successful experiences (Bordin, 1983; Ladany & Friedlander, 1995). This section features resources to guide supervisors in facilitating successful supervisory relationships.

Handbook of Administrative Supervision (Falvey, 1987).

This slim volume is meant for the counselor-turned-supervisor and provides solid information on the issues of the transition from the practitioner role to the administrative role. The author identified qualities of leadership and management skills that supervisors may wish to adopt. These qualities included the willingness and ability to manage and evaluate other
Legal and Ethical Issues in School Counselor Supervision (Herlihy, Gray, & McCollum, 2003)

These authors reviewed the contemporary status of school counselor supervision, and suggested that the dearth of supervision for school counselors may be related to perceptions that school counselors’ roles significantly differ from those of professional counselors in other settings. They addressed a variety of ethical issues in the context of supervision such as supervisors’ competence, confidentiality, boundaries, accountability, liability, and evaluation. The authors concluded with nine suggestions for persons who supervise school counselors.

Organizing a Practicum and Internship Program in Counselor Education (Pitts, 1992)

Although this article is directed to counselor educators who are designing field experiences, it offers information that is relevant for site supervisors. For example, the author’s discussion of roles attributed to university supervisors, site supervisors, and supervisees allows readers to view their individual responsibilities in the broader context of the intertwined relationships. The author also reviewed typical procedures for trainees to follow as they submit applications to internship sites, participate in interviews, and accept appointments. Aspects of internship supervision were illustrated, and the importance of various avenues for communication among all stakeholders was emphasized. For example, Pitts recommended that university faculty prepare written agreements that explicate conditions of the internship procedures and activities in which the interns will engage. Thus, it would be appropriate for site supervisors to request such a document.


Many principles of supervision apply to internships in all settings; nonetheless, supervision of counselors-in-training in school environments poses unique challenges, many of which are addressed in this article. The authors provided definitions for internship-related terminology, reviewed relevant professional standards, and identified unique challenges school counseling supervisors encounter. Thus, they asserted that “potential supervisors . . . must have [a] framework from which to operate in order to . . . provide optimum internship experiences” (p. 213). The authors proposed and elaborated on seven
guidelines such as “Site supervisors need to know what is expected of them prior to agreeing to host an intern” (p. 210). In this regard, Roberts and his colleagues identified documents to review, questions to answer, and contextual matters to consider in making decisions about supervising an intern. They also addressed challenges in obtaining advanced training to supervise and emphasized academic program faculty responsibilities in assuring that supervisor training opportunities are available. Similarly, they underscored the importance of regular communication between site supervisors and program faculty with amplified reference to appropriate responses when interns encounter difficulties that require remediation.

Closing Comments

The importance and value of effective supervision have been documented and emphasized in professional literature (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998). In fact, supervision has been characterized as “one of the primary vehicles through which a field evolves” (Liddle, Breunlin, & Schwartz, 1988, p. 4) and as a “means of transmitting the skills, knowledge and attitudes of a particular profession to the next generation in that profession” (Bernard & Goodyear, 1992, p. 2). In that regard, we emphasize that supervision is a distinct professional enterprise. Competent supervision is predicated upon a unique and specialized set of knowledge and skills acquired through specialized training and supervised experience (Magnuson, Wilcoxon, & Norem, 2000a, 2000b). We recognize that a variety of avenues for stimulating professional growth are available to contemporary counselors and supervisors. Such opportunities include independent study, workshops, continuing education courses, and supervision-of-supervision.

We also acknowledge and appreciate the copious resources available to supervisors. This review of organizations, texts, articles, and media is neither definitive nor exhaustive. However, we hope the recommendations will contribute to site supervisors’ repertoire of skills and resources for the important contributions they make to the professional development of school counselors-in-training, entry-level counselors, university preparation programs, the counseling profession, and—perhaps most important—the present and future students and their families who receive school counseling services.

References


