



JAMAICA ASSOCIATION OF GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS IN EDUCATION

CODE OF ETHICS FOR GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

PREAMBLE:

The Jamaica Association of Guidance Counsellors in Education is a professional organization whose mission is to:

- (a) facilitate the economic, intellectual and professional development of the individual counsellor in order to encourage efficient delivery of counselling service to educational institutions and to the wider society.
- (b) To affect public opinion.

It is committed to the standards of Holistic development of the individuals it serves. We therefore espouse the following standards as binding on our professional conduct. (JAGCE Constitution: Article 1. Section 2, Item 6.)

***THE COUNSELLING PLANS:**

The counsellor shall work jointly with the school community to develop a comprehensive guidance and counselling plan reflective of the needs of the community and its members; consistent with abilities and circumstances of the counsellor and the community. The viability and effectiveness of the plan should be reviewed intermittently.

(1) RESPONSIBILITIES TO SELF:

- ❖ The counsellor shall be aware of his areas of competence and offer services within his area of training and expertise.
- ❖ The counsellor shall refrain from undertaking any activity where his personal limitations are likely to result in professional services, which may harm a counsellor.
- ❖ The Counsellor shall be aware of his/her limitation and emotional need and seek counselling where necessary.
- ❖ The counsellor shall be prepared to refer those cases beyond his/her area of training or specialty.
- ❖ It is the responsibility of the counsellor to be aware of existing public and private agencies, which may be used as other resources to further assist counsellors.
- ❖ It is unethical for an individual to claim whether directly or by implication, professional qualifications that exceed those he/she actually attained.
- ❖ The counsellor is responsible for continual professional growth and development in the field of guidance and counselling.

(2) RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PROFESSION:

The Counsellor shall:

- Conduct himself/herself in such a manner as to bring credit to himself/herself and the profession.
- Not guarantee easy solutions or favourable outcomes as a result of the counselling process.
- Be aware that significant confidential information may be released to qualified professionals with the consent of the counsellor or parent.

(3) RESPONSIBILITIES TO COLLEAGUE:

The counsellor shall:

- Establish and maintain professional relationships through networking.
- Treat colleague with professional respect, courtesy and fairness.
- Be aware of and adhere to their duties as outlined in the constitution of JAGCE.

(4) RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS:

The counsellor shall:

- Treat all students with fairness, respect, understanding, and tact without prejudice to race, religion or socioeconomic status of the parent/student.
- The counsellor should refrain from punitive action in the counselling process.
- Owe his/her primary loyalty to the counsellor.

(5) **RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHER PROFESSIONALS:**

The counsellor shall:

- With client's consent, share information with other professionals and develop clear understanding to avoid confusion or conflict.
- Promote awareness and adherence to appropriate guidelines regarding confidentiality.
- Provide other professionals with accurate, objective and meaningful data.

(6) **RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PARENTS:**

The counsellor shall:

- Work in every way possible with the parent for the good of the counsellee.
- Respect the basic responsibility of parents for their children.
- Seek to establish friendly and cooperative relationships with the home.
- Be discreet with information received from the parent.

(7) **RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY:**

The counsellor shall:

- Utilize all available teachers and other staff members who may be of assistance in aiding a counsellee.
- Facilitate teachers and other counsellors who are directly concerned, allowing routine access to all cumulative data except confidential records.
- Maintain the disciplinary, behavioural and emotional records of the counsellee in a confidential file, separate and apart from the cumulative file.

(8) **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- Significant confidential information may be released to qualified professionals with the consent of the counsellee or parent.
- The counsellor is not released from maintaining confidentiality because others have the same knowledge.
- Confidential information may be revealed to another counsellor in seeking assistance, if the counsellee's anonymity is maintained.

THE JAGCE ETHICS COMMITTEE is responsible for educating and consulting with the membership regarding ethical standards. The committee will periodically review and recommend changes deemed necessary to the code of ethics in addition to processing questions, clarifying application and handling alleged violation of our ethical standards.

Complaints and concerns can be forwarded in writing to: JAGCE ETHICS COMMITTEE, c/o Jamaica Association Of Guidance Counsellors In Education.

RESOURCES

1. Hopkins, B. & Anderson, B. (1985). The counselor and the law. Alexandria, M VA: AACD Press.
2. American School Counseling, (1998) Ethical Standards for School Counselors. Alexandria, VA. (801 North Fairfax, Suite 310, Alexandria, VA 22314)
3. Callahan, JH. C. (1988). Ethical issues in professional life. New York: Oxford University Press.
4. Donaldson, T. (1986). Issues in moral philosophy. New York: McGraw-Hill.
5. Hart, G. M. (1982). Values clarification for counselors. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.