



Next Gen Guidance: Counseling Gen Z and Gen Alpha

Counselor Webinar Series 25-26



Thank You for Joining Us Today!

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Attendees will receive a link to the recorded presentation within 24 to 48 hours at the email address used for registration.

Event Resources

You have access to a copy of the PowerPoint slides and various downloadable resources under the Event Resources Tab.

Questions and Answers

The presenter will answer as many questions as possible during the Q and A session after the presentation. If your question isn't answered, we'll directly email you the answer to your question.

CEU Credit

Most of our webinars come with free CEU credit. You must watch the entire webinar to gain access to the CEU quiz. It'll pop up in a separate window once the webinar is concluded.

Pre-Webinar Poll Questions

How knowledgeable are you about this topic?

- A. Very knowledgeable
- B. Somewhat Knowledgeable
- C. Not at All Knowledgeable

Based on your current practices, to what extent do you share/use information about this program/topic with your students?

- A. Consistently – I regularly incorporate this program/topic into my counseling activities and correspondence.
- B. Occasionally – I share information when it feels relevant or when students ask about it.
- C. Rarely – I’ve only shared this program/topic once or twice, or not in a structured way.
- D. Not at all – I do not currently share this program/topic with my students.



Dawn Mann, Ed.D.

**Counselor on Special Assignment
Val Verde USD**

Former

- Director of Engagement Services, Hatching Results
- Director of Counselor Engagement, CEFGA
- Program Manager for Career Readiness & Counseling, GaDOE
- High School Counselor & Lead School Counselor, Cobb County, Georgia
- Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP), 2010
- 2017 National School Counselor of the Year Finalist
- 2014 Cobb High School Counselor of the Year

Learning Objectives

Goals

By the end of this workshop, you will know how to

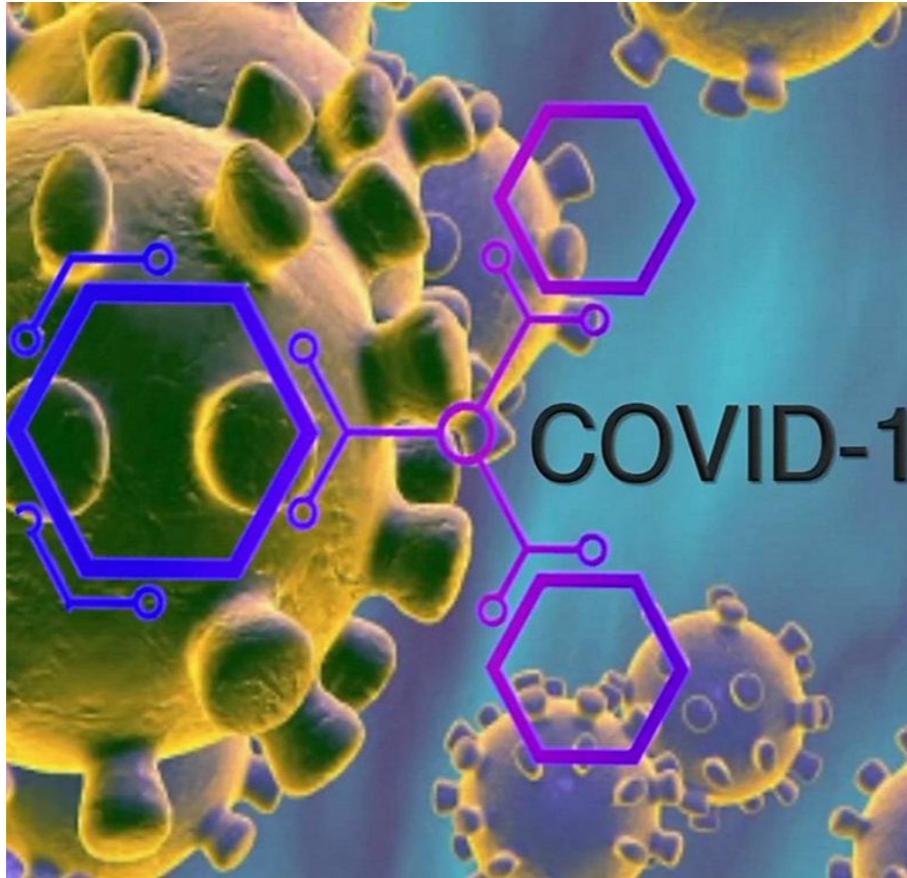
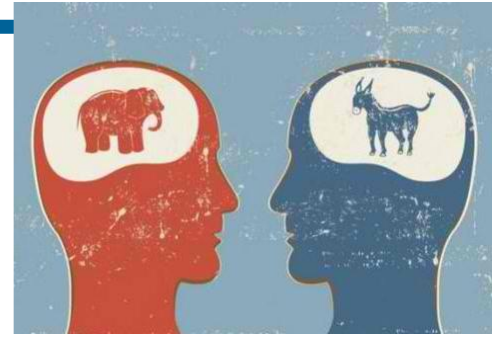
- Explain how generational characteristics impact school counseling programs (e.g., counseling, advisement, and appraisal).
- Identify strategies to connect generational characteristics with high school academics to foster meaning and relevancy.

Today's Agenda

- 01** Who Are Our Students?
- 02** Using Backward Design to Personalize Career Readiness
- 03** School Counseling Program Interventions for Gen Z
- 04** School Counseling Program Interventions for Gen Alpha



Who are our students?



What We Know About Gen Z

Social

Multi-Taskers

Entrepreneurs

Educated

Philanthropists

Digital Natives

Redemptive

Tech-Savvy

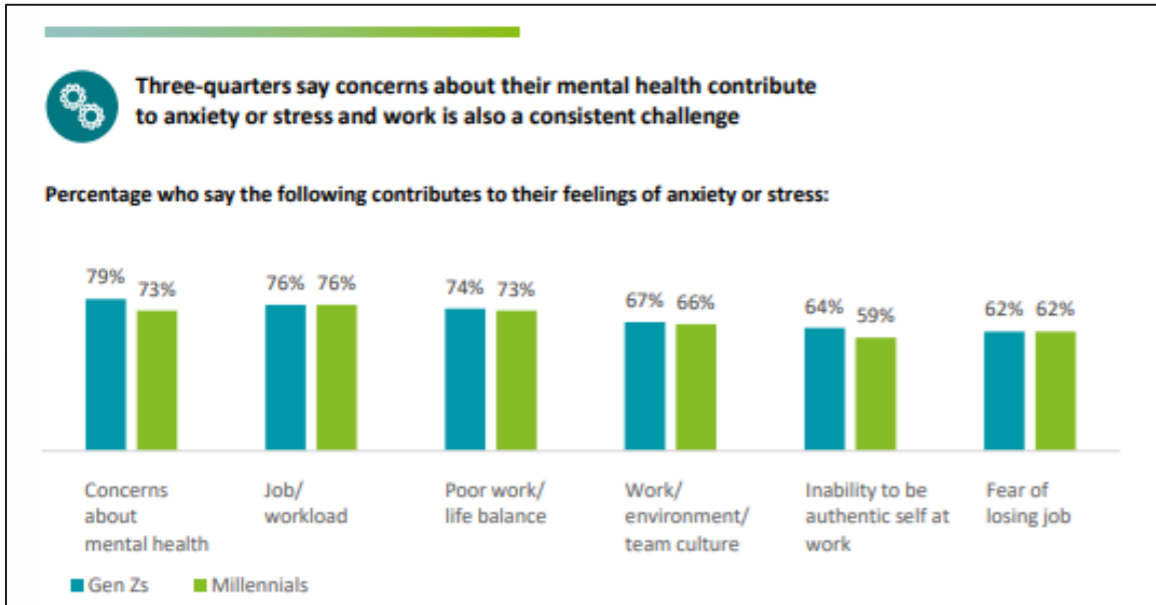
Restless

Cautious

Anxious

The Deloitte 2023 Gen Z & Millennial Survey

22,000 participants in 44 countries | 12th Year Conducted



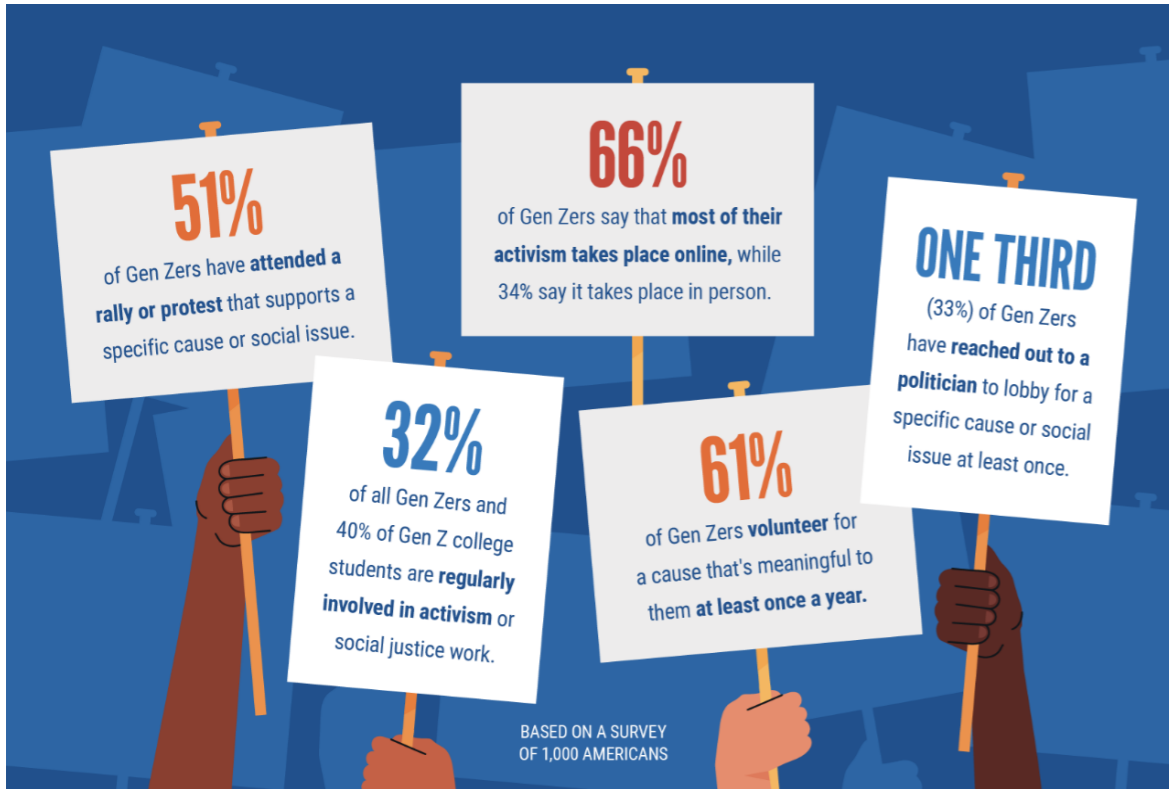
The Concerns Driving the Stress and Anxiety

1. Gen Z participants reported that finances and the welfare of their families contributed to their stress levels (79% of respondents)
2. The mental health of their generation (25% of Gen Z women)
3. Work-related stressors: heavy workload, poor work/life balance, unhealthy team cultures, and the inability to be their authentic self at work and disconnect from work (60% of respondents)

The United Way (National Capital Area) Gen Z Activism Survey

1,000 American participants | March 2024

Gen Z's Approach to Activism

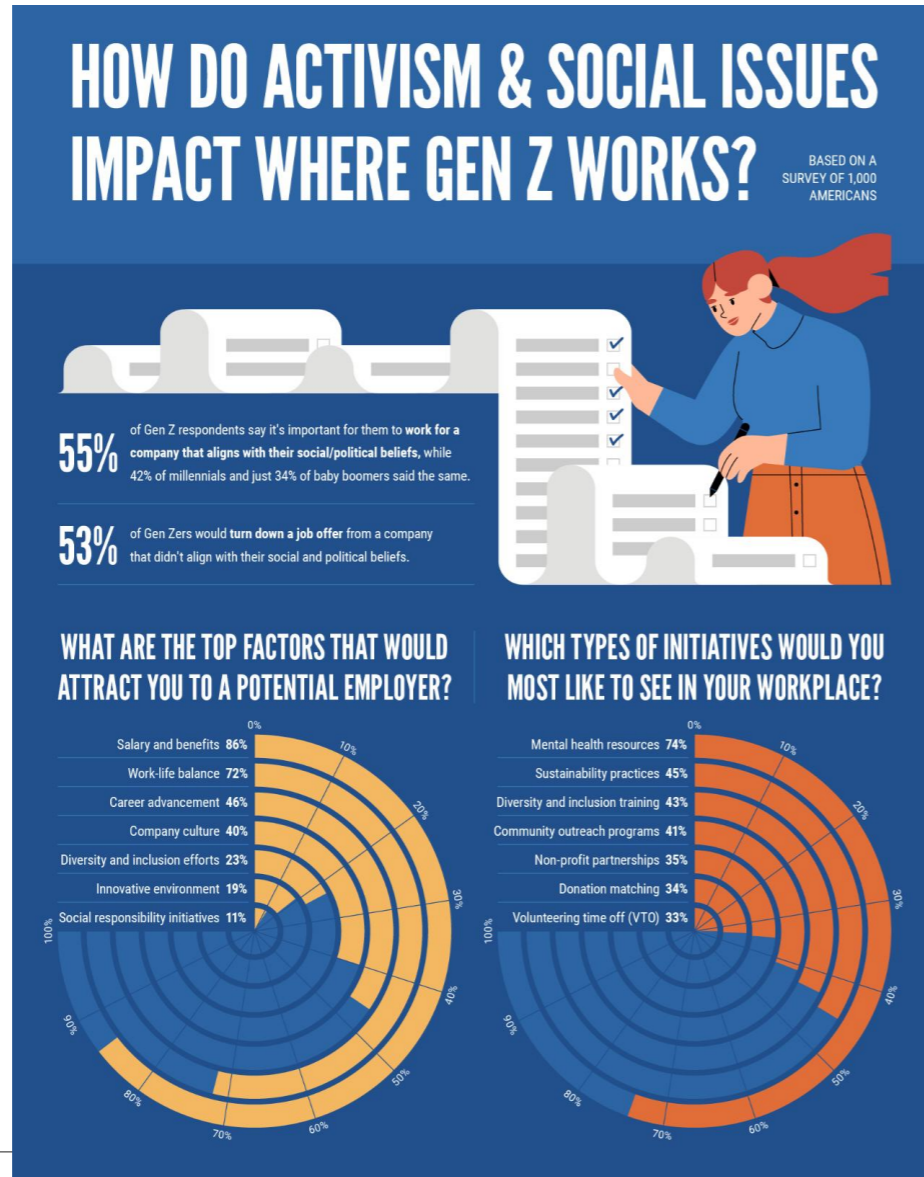


“When asked what drives their activism, the largest share of Gen Zers (62%) cited **moral and ethical reasons**, saying that it feels like the right thing to do, followed by 51% who cited **personal experience** as the driving force—either themselves or others close to them are directly affected by a specific cause or issue.”

Gen Z's Primary Concerns

1. Inflation/cost of living (57%)
2. Healthcare access/affordability (55%)
3. Affordable housing (52%)
4. Climate change initiatives (47%)
5. Gun control (42%)
6. Income inequality (40%)
7. Racial equity (39%).

The Impact of Their **Activism & Social Issues**



The Six Generations

	Builders	Boomers	Generation X	Millennials/ Generation Y	Generation Z	Gen Alpha
Birth Years	1925-1949	1946-1964	1965-1979	1980-1994	1995 - 2009	2010-2024
Life Paradigm	Be grateful you have a job	You owe me	Relate to me	Life is a cafeteria	I'm coping and hoping	Life is personalized
Sense of Identity	I am humble	I am valuable	I am valuable	I am awesome	I am fluid	I am curated
Attitude Toward Authority	Respect them	Replace them	Endure them	Choose them	Not sure I need them	Collaborate with them
Role of Work	Means for a living	Central focus	Irritant	Place to serve	It's my hobby	Platform to innovate
Role of Relationships	Significant	Limited; useful	Central; caring	Unlimited; global	Utilitarian	Hybrid—online & in-person
Technology	Hope to outlive it	Master it	Employ it	Enjoy it	Hack it	Ambient & embedded
Market	Goods	Services	Experiences	Transformations	Reinventions	Immersive experience
View of the Future	Seek to stabilize	Create it!	Skeptical	YOLO	FOMO	Augmented, blended, evolving

Elmore, 2019

The Six Generations —Life Paradigm and Sense of Identity

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Elmore, 2019

The Six Generations—Attitude toward Authority

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The Six Generations—Role of Work

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Elmore, 2019

Question the Quo | Gen Z Teens Priorities for Education & Work

ECMC Group, in partnership with VICE Media conducted seven national Question the Quo surveys of high school students to understand their perceptions of postsecondary education and their plans for the future.

- Total Sample Size Since 2020: 7,339
- Survey Date Ranges: February 2020 – January 2023

Top Findings

- 75% feel pressured to pursue a 4-year degree
- 63% are open to options other than pursuing a four-year college
- 59% agree that they can be successful without a four-year degree (up 5 percentage points since pre-COVID-19)
- 38% report that because of the pandemic, they feel more comfortable following a path other than a four-year college
- 53% want more formalized learning throughout their life
- 13% feel fully prepared to choose their path after high school

Question the Quo

Gen Z Teens Priorities for Education and Work

How important are the following factors in what you decide to do after high school?

90% said “the career I am interested in pursuing”

88% said “how much money I can make over the long term”

86% said “my mental health”

82% said “whether there is a direct path to a job/career”

80% said “the cost of tuition”

When seeking information about next steps after high school, **62%** commonly turn to family, teachers, and school counselors.

“My counselor because she has my best interest at heart and wants me to succeed in life.”

Let's Talk About Gen Alpha

Students born since 2010

1. Born into a politically polarized world.
2. The Pandemic marked their early years.
3. Mental health has always been a problem for their Millennial and Gen Z parents.

On trend to be the most educated

Most technologically immersed

Likely to be the most materially endowed

Likely to be the most impatient

Most self-directed

More virtual than human relationships

Most likely to spend childhood without both biological parents

COVID-19's Role and Impact on Gen-Alpha

- Eighty percent of Gen-Alpha students played a significant role in shaping their own learning experiences.
- Quick learning is essential for Gen-Alpha students. In the hardest-hit communities — where students fell behind by more than one and a half years in math — like Richmond, Va.; St. Louis; and New Haven, Conn. — schools would have had to teach 150 percent of a typical year's worth of material for three years in a row just to catch up. It is magical thinking to expect they will make this happen without a major increase in instructional time. (GWI, 2024)
- Increased instructional time is essential for Gen-Alpha students. (GWI, 2024)
- Declining test scores are a concern. For example, the average student was now a year behind in math and three years behind in reading (NY Times, 2023)

Potential Educational Impact

- Millennial parents are parenting differently
- Learning that fits their needs and learning styles (e.g., hyper-connectivity and independence)
- Classroom management tools—visual, aural, kinesthetic, and real-world activities
- Reduced concentration and attention spans
- Little socialization due to time spent online
- Small screen fatigue—decreased interest in computer-based subjects
- Online game time instead of physical toys, which may impact creativity and imagination

SURVEY TIME...

How might the generational characteristics impact your work as an educator?



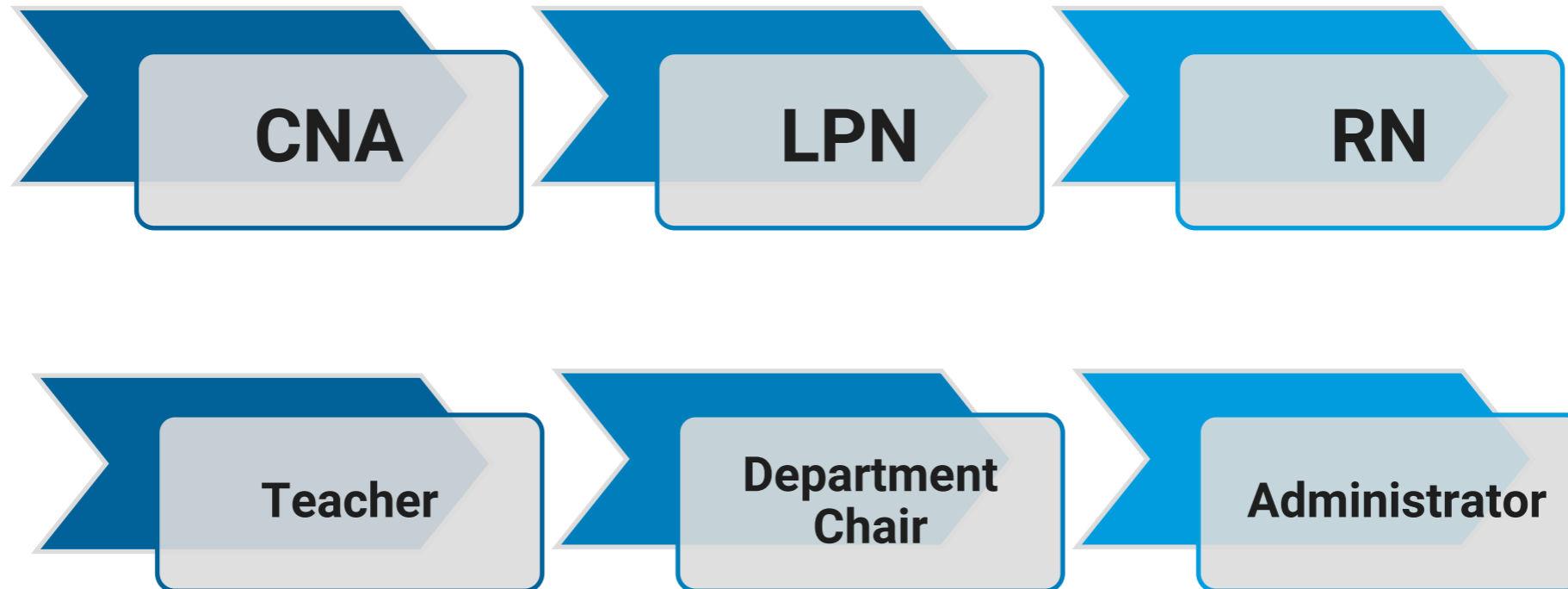


How can we connect careers, postsecondary education, and high school academics to foster meaning and relevancy?



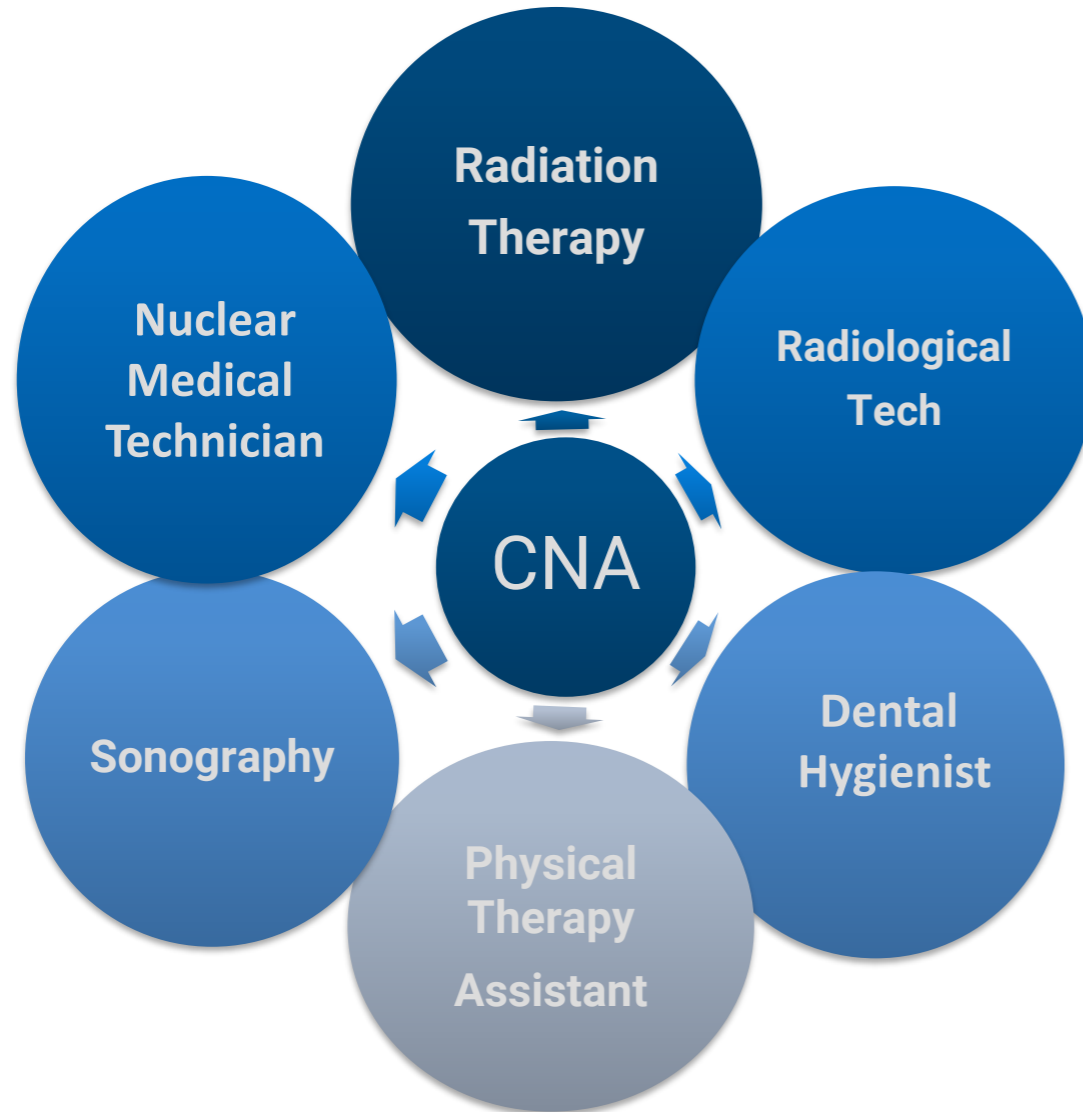
Consider High School Pathways More Like Entry Points and Constellations Than Direct Lines

Avoid thinking only in career lines: Example--Nursing



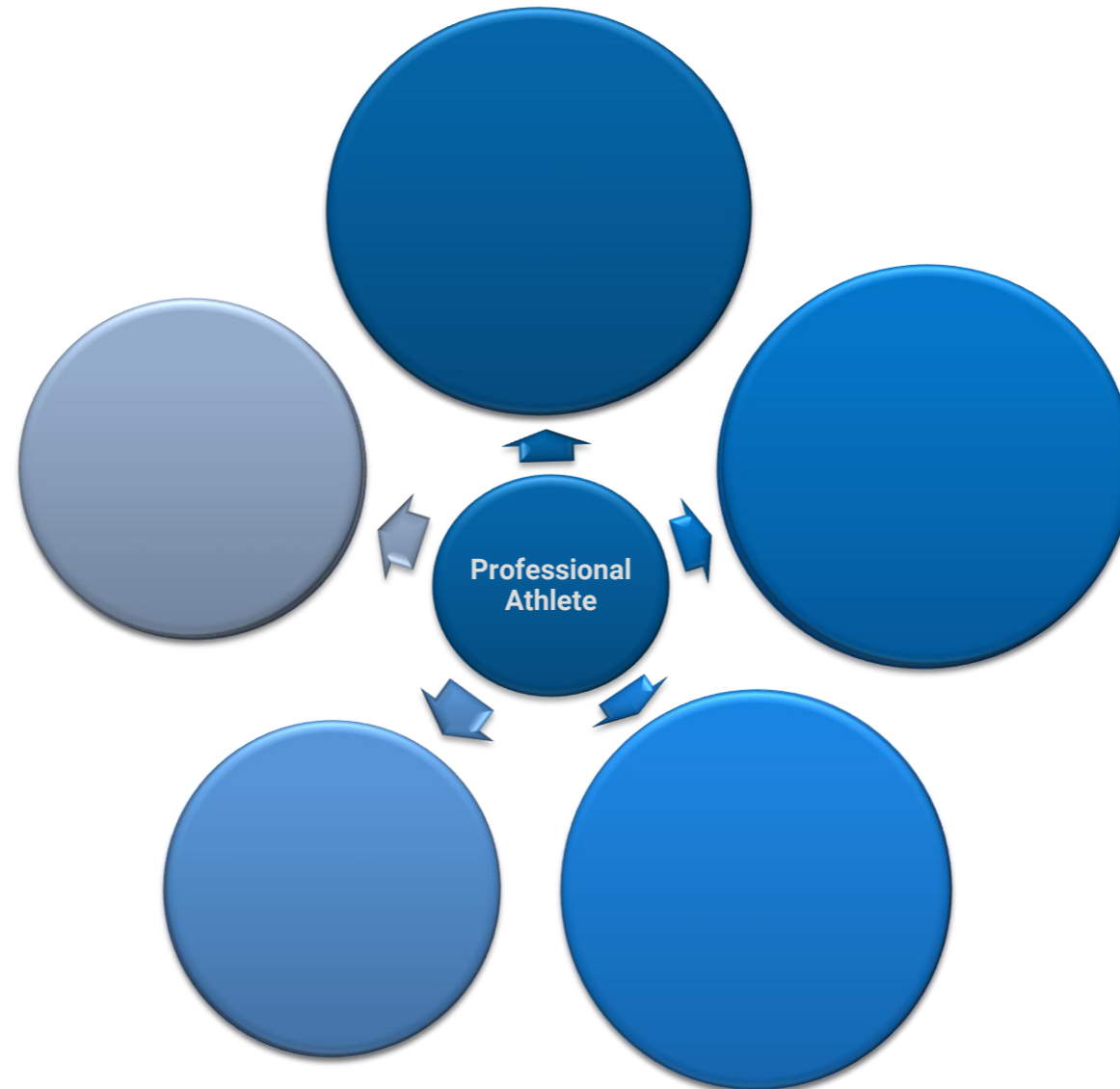
Expanding Secondary Student Career Options Through Career Constellations

Career Constellations

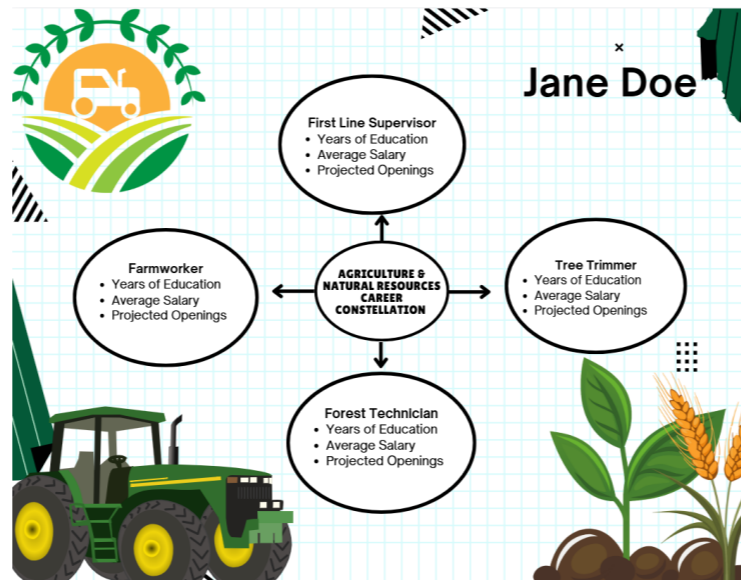
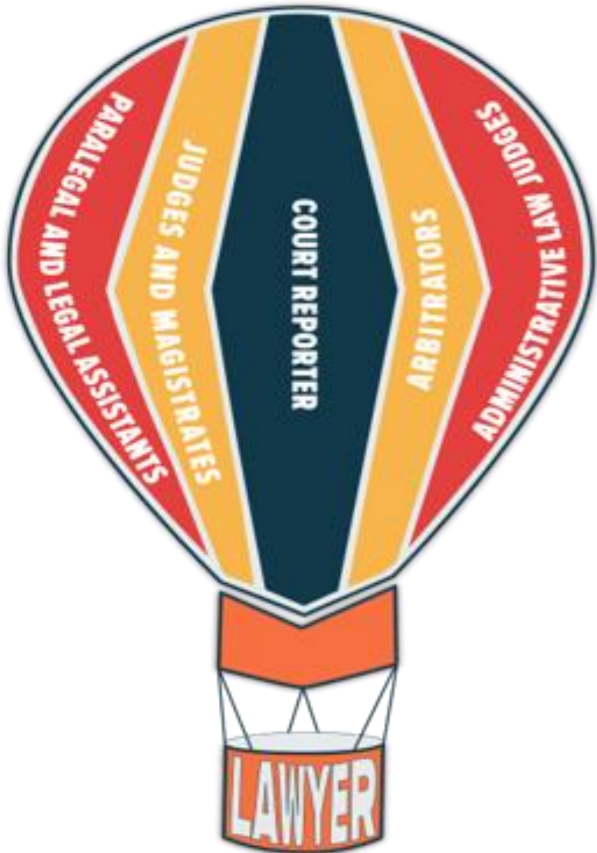


- **Radiation Therapist** \$82,790
- **Radiological Tech** \$61,980
- **Dental Hygienist** \$77,810
- **Physical Therapy Assistant** \$49,180
- **Sonography** \$75,380
- **Nuclear Medical Technician** \$78,760
- **Licensed Practical Nurse** \$48,070

A Simple Constellation in Real Time



Have Fun with Career Constellations



Start With the End in Mind

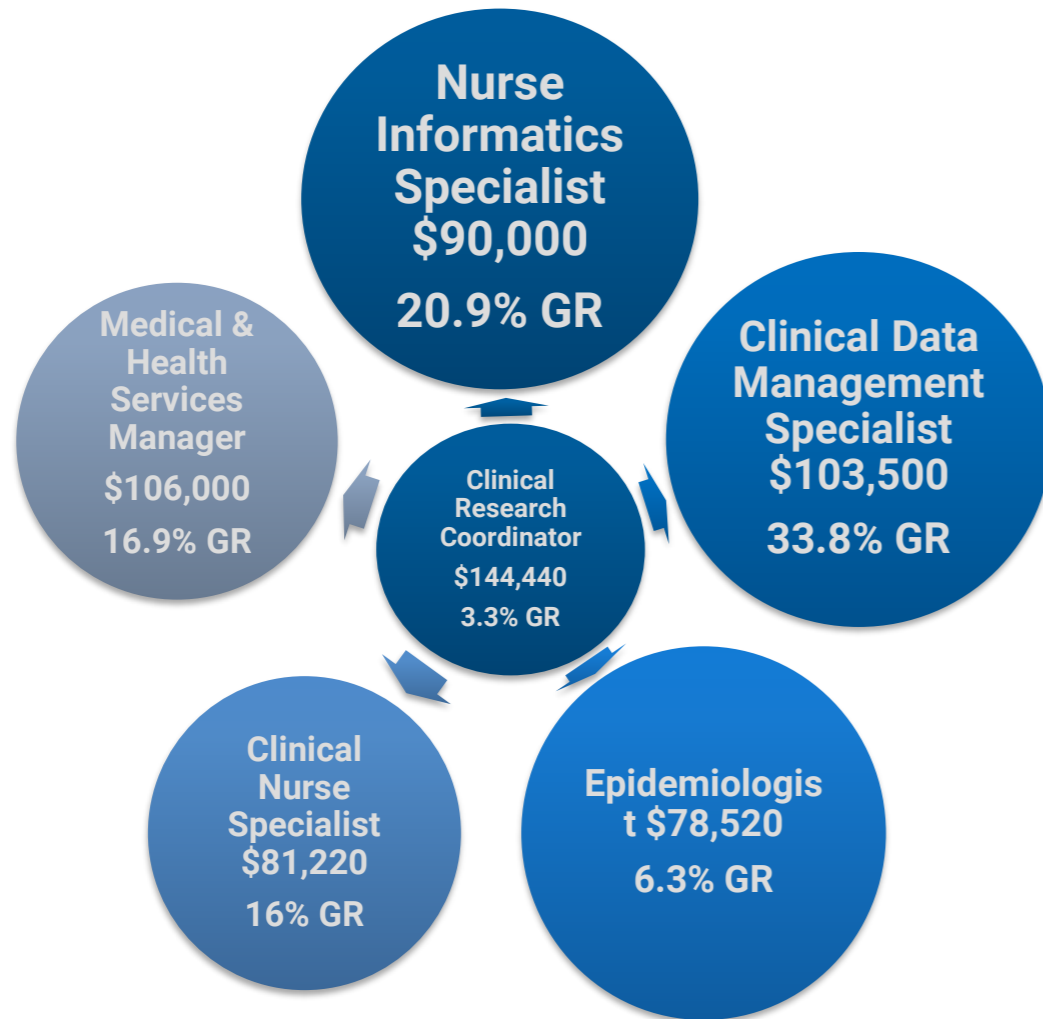
McKenzi, a 9th-grade student, meets with her counselor, Dr. Williams, to discuss McKenzie's career interest results.

McKenzi: I found the career for me! I want to work as a **Clinical Research Coordinator**. What do I need to know?

Dr. Williams: Don't worry. I know exactly how I can help you.



McKenzi's Career Constellation



Post-Secondary Career Development:

- Bachelor's Degree
 - Biological Sciences
 - Biochemistry
 - Molecular Biology
 - Computer Information Science
 - Information Technology
 - Health Policy Analysis
 - Health Care Administration/Management
- Master's Degree
 - Epidemiology

Let's Backward Design McKenzi's Career Development

1

Clinical Research Coordinators

Plan, direct, or coordinate clinical research projects. Direct the activities of workers engaged in clinical research projects to ensure compliance with protocols and overall clinical objectives. May eva...

[Show More](#)

Health Science



Median Yearly Income

\$137,904



Most Common Education Level

Bachelor's degree



Projected Job Growth

+8.03%

[Add to List](#)

2

Commonly Held Degrees

- 55% hold a Bachelor's Degree
- 12% hold a Master's Degree

3

Best Majors or Career Programs

- Biology
- Biochemistry
- Molecular Biology
- Biostatistics
- Computer Science

4

General Biology Plan of Study

Freshman Year

Fall	Spring	
BIOL 1110,1111 General Biol I/Lab	4 BIOL 1120,1121 General Biol II/Lab	4
CHEM 1110 General Chemistry I	3 CHEM 1120 General Chemistry II	3
CHEM 1111 General Chemistry I Lab	1 CHEM 1121 General Chemistry II Lab	1
ENGL 1010 Freshman English I	3 ENGL 1020 Freshman English II	3
ART 1010*	3 MATH 1720 Pre-Calculus or higher	3
UNIV 1000 Service to Leadership	1 Music 1010*	3
	15	17

Sophomore Year

Fall	Spring	
BIOL 2110, 2111 Cell Biology and Lab	4 BIOL 2120, 2121 Principles of Genetics and Lab	4
CHEM 2010 Organic Chemistry I	3 CHEM 2020 Organic Chemistry II	3
CHEM 2011 Organic Chemistry I Lab	1 CHEM 2021 Organic Chemistry II Lab	1
ENGL 2012 English literature	3 HIST 2020 American History II	3
HIST 2010 American History I	3 SOCI 2010 Introduction to Sociology*	3
COMM 2200 Public Speaking	3 PSYC 2010 General Psychology*	3
	17	17

Junior Year

Fall	Spring	
BIOL 3200, 3201 Mammalian Physiology and Lab	4 BIOL 4120, 4121 Principles of Ecology and Lab	4
CHEM 3410 General Biochemistry I	3 Biology Elective/Lab (3000-4000)	4
CHEM 3411 General Biochemistry I lab	1 PHYS 2020 College Physics II	3
PHYS 2010 College Physics I**	3 PHYS 2021 College Physics II Lab	1
PHYS 2011 College Physics I Lab	1 General Elective (3000-4000 level)	3
BIOL 3110 Biometrics	3	
	15	15

Senior Year

Fall	Spring	
BIOL 4170 Senior Seminar	1 Biology Elective/Lab (3000-4000)	4
Biology Elective/Lab (3000-4000)	4 General Elective (Any 3000-4000 level course)	3
Biology Elective/Lab (3000-4000)	4 General Elective (Any 3000-4000 level course)	3
General Elective (Any 3000-4000 level course)	3 General Elective (Any 3000-4000 level course)	3
	Biology 4180 Senior Seminar	1
	12	14

Total 122 Credit Hours

McKenzi's 5-Year Academic & Career Plan

	8th Grade	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade		Post-High School
English		H. 9th Lit	H. World Lit.	AP Lang.	<p>Let's be careful with majors and understand the difference between majors and careers.</p>	Tennessee State University
Math	Algebra I	H. Geometry	H. Algebra II	Acc. Pre-Calc.		Major
Science		H. Biology	H. Physics	H. Chemistry		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biology
Social Studies			H. World Hist.	H. US History		Other Possible Majors
CTE, World Language, Fine Arts, ROTC	Spanish I	H Spanish II	H. Spanish III	H. Spanish IV		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health with a minor in Molecular Cell Biology Public Health with a minor in Computer Science
Physical Education		Body Sculpting Aerobic Dance		Health & Personal Fitness		
Electives		Intro to Healthcare	Essentials of Healthcare	Patient Care Fundamentals	DE Healthcare AP Psychology	
Electives		Intro to Law	Legal Env. Bus. Sociology	AP Chemistry		
Total Units	2	8	8	8	6	

Let's hear from McKenzi

Scholarship
Award Total
\$233,000



Additional Interventions to Support Gen Z in the School Counseling Program

Foster Conversations

“Teaching is a valuable and rewarding profession, but it can also be tiring and exhausting. Teaching is arguably more difficult now than it has ever been for a variety of reasons, including learner behavior, fast-changing technology, and poor compensation.”

The disconnects seem to stem from:

- Student engagement at school
- Genuine conversations at home

1. Authentic conversations
2. Stretching inspiration by including:
 - a. Relevancy
 - b. Community connections
 - c. Staying in the present



SEL Readiness Skill-Building for Gen Z

1

Mental Health Literacy

Challenge: High anxiety and mental health concerns accompanied by elevated depression and stress levels.

Teach coping strategies and help-seeking behaviors.

2

Self-Regulation & Resilience

Challenge: Social media pressure leading to comparison and self-esteem struggles.

Teach mindfulness, stress management, and grit-building.

3

Authentic Connections

Challenge: A desire for belonging and authentic relationships.

Teach relationship skills and incorporate peer mentoring programs and restorative practices

4

Digital Balance

Challenge: Exposure to trauma (school shooting, political polarization, COVID disruptions, and more)

Teach healthy technology use and how to manage online/offline identity

Academic Readiness Skill-Building for Gen Z

1

Executive Functioning

Challenge: Shorter attention spans, used to on-demand learning.

Teach organization, time management, study skills.

2

Critical Thinking & Media Literacy

Challenge: Struggle with focus and persistence in non-digital environments.

Teach navigating misinformation, artificial intelligence, and bias.

3

Collaboration & Project-Based Learning

Challenge: Strong preference for interactive, applied learning.

Teach how to work on a team as an effective team member.

4

Growth Mindset

Challenge: Academic disruptions due to COVID-19, especially in math and literacy.

Teach reframing failure, building academic confidence.

Career Readiness Skill-Building for Gen Z

1

Career Exploration & Identity

Challenge: A desire to seek careers that align with purpose, flexibility, and social impact.

Teach connecting career interests, career aptitudes, work/lifestyle balance needs, and personality traits to careers that fit

2

Financial Literacy

Challenge: Value entrepreneurship and gig economy opportunities.

Teach financial literacy--budgeting, the impact of student loans, and the cost-benefit of postsecondary pathways.

3

Adaptability & Innovation

Challenge: Concern about the affordability of college and debt.

Teach information gathering and analysis skills for a changing job market.

4

Professional Skills

Challenge: High exposure to nontraditional career paths via social media (influencers, content creators).

Teach networking, communication, and personal branding skills.

Additional School Counseling Program Supports for Gen Alpha

SEL Readiness Skill-Building for Gen Alpha

1

Emotional Regulation & Patience

Challenge: Lower frustration tolerance and shorter attention spans.

Teach coping strategies, mindfulness, resilience, and stress reduction.

2

Empathy & Connection

Challenge: Loneliness and anxiety despite constant digital connection.

Teach peer mentoring, healthy friendships, service projects, and restorative practices.

3

Interpersonal Communication

Challenge: Exposure to crisis and polarization from an early age.

Teach active listening, face-to-face confidence, and collaboration.

4

Digital Balance

Challenge: Exposure to crisis and polarization from an early age.

Teach setting healthy boundaries with devices and social media.

Academic Readiness Skill-Building for Gen Alpha

1

Executive Functioning

Challenge: Gen Alpha members expect personalized, adaptive learning experiences.

Teach organization systems, time management, focus strategies.

2

Critical Thinking & Media Literacy

Challenge: Strong technology fluency

Teach evaluating online content and artificial intelligence output.

3

Growth Mindset & Resilience

Challenge: Weaker executive functioning (organization, persistence).

Teach reframing failure as an opportunity and build the ability to persevere.

4

Academic Planning

Challenge: Learning loss and developmental delays tied to COVID-19 disruptions.

Teach students how to scaffold coursework rigor, balance, and postsecondary goals.

Career Readiness Skill-Building for Gen Alpha

1

Career Exploration & Awareness

Challenge: Gen Alpha members see work as a platform for innovation and social impact.

Teach connecting career interests, career aptitudes, work/lifestyle balance needs, and personality traits to careers and provide exposure to a wide array of careers.

2

Innovation & Creativity

Challenge: Prefer immersive, hybrid, and digital-first pathways.

Teach problem-solving, design thinking, and entrepreneurship.

3

Service Orientation

Challenge: Risk of overvaluing fame-driven digital careers (influencers, gaming).

Teach connecting work to purpose and community contribution.

4

Career Navigation Skills

Challenge: Delayed independence, with many likely living at home into their late 20s.

Teach resume development, digital portfolio creation, networking skills, and adaptability in thinking.



Questions?

Post-Webinar Poll Questions

How knowledgeable are you about this topic?

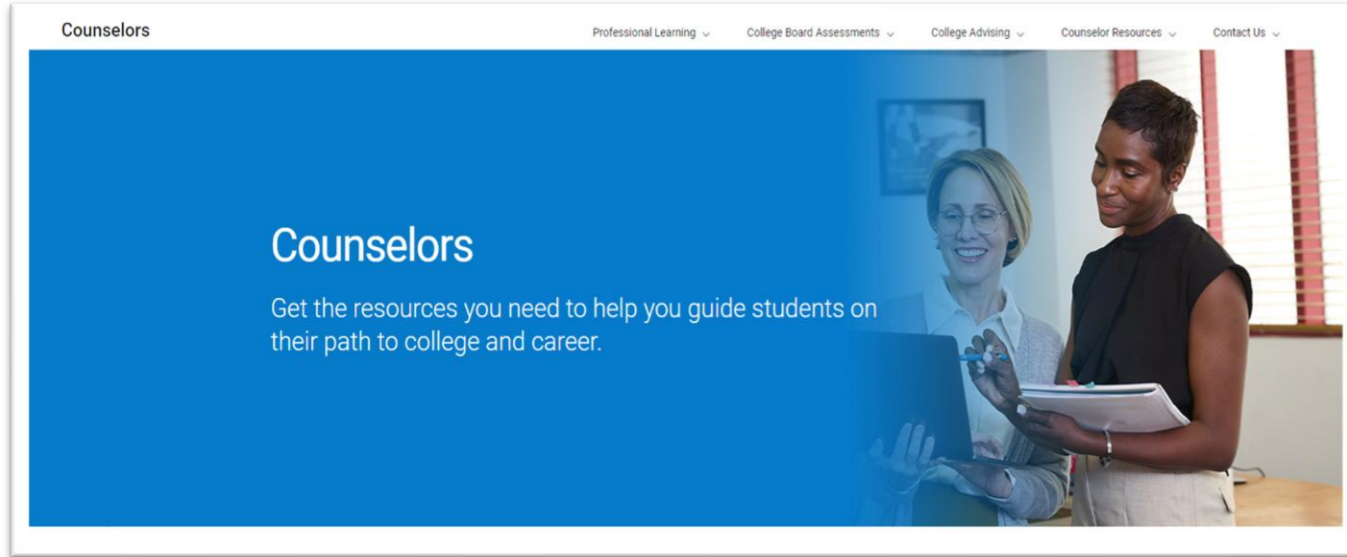
- A. Very knowledgeable
- B. Somewhat Knowledgeable
- C. Not at All Knowledgeable

Based on what you learned in today's webinar, how likely are you to share/use information about this program/topic with your students?

- A. Very likely
- B. Somewhat likely
- C. Not likely
- D. Not applicable

College Board for Counselors

Where to find helpful resources



Professional Learning

Register for upcoming events and workshops so you can develop your skills as a counselor. Plus, you could earn continuing education units (CEUs).

Toolkits for Counselors

Find helpful resources, strategies, tools, and more to help you support your students' learning and growth as they prepare for college.

Modules for New Counselors

Free professional development designed to help new counselors as they embark on the career of high school counseling.

Counselor Webinar Series 25-26

AUG
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Navigating College Application Season: A Guide for New High School Counselors

SEP
18

Next Gen Guidance: Counseling Gen Z and Gen Alpha

OCT
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Getting it Done: How School Counselors can Help Boost FAFSA Completion

NOV
20

Application Trends Unpacked: Emerging Patterns in Student's Application Behavior

JAN
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Middle School Matters: Preparing Middle School Students for Rigorous High School Courses

FEB
19

Using BigFuture School to Access Scores and Explore Careers—Middle School

MAR
19

College and Career Trends: What Every Counselor Should Know

APR
16

Middle School Matters: College & Career Conversations Now

Register today at collegeboard.org/counselors

Thank you for joining us today!

At the close of the webinar, please

- Complete the webinar evaluation. We want to ensure we continue to provide excellent professional development.
- Complete the 5-question quiz to earn CEU hours (optional).
- Feel free to review and share today's webinar. The presentation will be forwarded to your email address in 24 hours.
- Thank you for all that you do in the service of students!

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