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An Analysis of Peer Counseling as a Guidance Process in Educational Settings: A Review of Literature and a Model for Implementation

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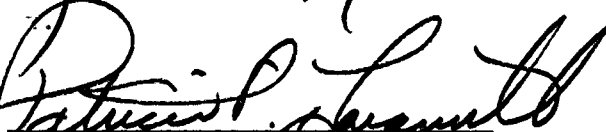
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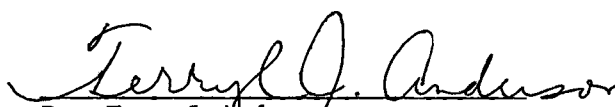
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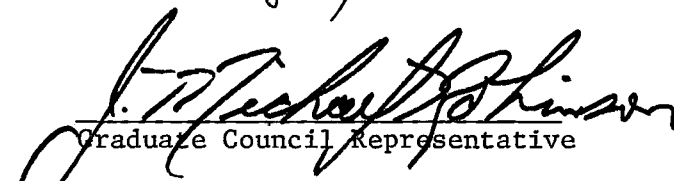
We, the undersigned members of the examination committee, certify that we have examined the student and that she has met all requirements for the degree Master of Arts with a major in Counseling and Guidance; further, we have examined her on this date and have determined that she has demonstrated a satisfactory knowledge of her field of specialization in scope and quality for the degree Master of Arts.

APPROVED by the Comprehensive Examination Committee:


Dr. Richard Miller, Chairman


Dr. Patricio T. Jaramillo


Dr. Terry J. Anderson


Graduate Council Representative

Date: May 11, 1977

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AN ANALYSIS OF PEER COUNSELING
AS A GUIDANCE PROCESS IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS:
A REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND A MODEL FOR IMPLEMENTATION

by

Virginia E. Reed

Report of a Master's Project

Submitted to the Faculty of Pedagogical Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
for the Degree

Master of Arts

The University of Texas of the Permian Basin

May 1977

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Abstract

This study was designed to investigate the efficacy of the peer helping model as a viable approach to extending guidance services to students not now being served effectively due to manpower constraints in the public schools. Evaluation and research data supporting peer counseling programs are limited. Since the use of peer helpers as an identified and organized element within a guidance program is a relatively new phenomenon, still considered experimental or "innovative", it is not surprising that information is tenuous and often ambiguous. However, the growth of peer counseling programs during the last decade, along with the apparent success of many programs similar to peer counseling in purpose and methods, indicates that the peer influence model has potential for helping meet the needs of adolescents.

Peer counseling has gone through several developmental stages, beginning in college programs that were gradually extended into high school settings, often with college graduate students as coordinators. As programs evolved, the formats of the high schools were adapted for use in junior high and elementary schools. From the early programs, which depended upon recruitment of "models", have evolved detailed plans, flow-charts, and syllabi, with training and supervision as basic elements of most programs. Evaluations relative to the effectiveness of peer counseling programs frequently attempt to assess changes in the peer helpers that have resulted from their participation, rather than trying to judge the value to the counselees themselves.

With the limited assessment data, which varies widely in character and sophistication, definitive evaluation of the effectiveness of peer counseling programs is largely a matter of judgment and conjecture.

A promising sign, however, is the widespread acceptance of the program, where it has been instituted, by parents, teachers, and administrators, as well as by the guidance personnel, with the result that new programs continue to be initiated each year.