

**2019 UFT School Counselors Conference**  
**March 9, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.**  
**UFT headquarters, 52 Broadway, Manhattan**

**Morning Workshops**

● **Creating Powerful Presence through Mindfulness Practices**

Participants will learn a variety of ways to use mindfulness to practice better self-care, both inside and outside of the school setting. In the process, participants will discover how this effort can increase our capacity to be more fully present - with ourselves, with our students, and with others in our lives. Through a combination of didactic material, discussion, and simple mindfulness exercises, participants will be offered some practical tools and skills they can start using right away, and even share with their students if they choose to.

● **Social Media Pitfalls**

Over 27 million pieces of content are shared every day on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. With the large volume of content produced, it is easy for us to fall into some common social media pitfalls. This workshop will examine seven challenges schools might face and provide solutions for how to overcome these obstacles. We'll examine how to define the appropriate posting cadence and how to create share-worthy content. As a result of this workshop, you will learn how to avoid these road blocks and create engaging social media content for your students on social media.

● **College Recommendation Writing**

In this informative and experiential workshop participants will learn about the impact that counselor recommendations have on student applications. Specific topics that will be covered are the differences in the content of teacher and counselor recommendations, key elements included in the counselor recommendation letter, and techniques for collecting data to assist in writing the recommendation letter. Participants will understand how to use recommendation writing as a student advocacy tool and will take away ready to implement strategies for writing effective counselor recommendations.

● **Stand Up and Lead!: A whole school community approach to bullying and cyber-bullying in 2019**

Dynamic presentation on how students, families and schools can effectively work together on bullying solutions. Bullying is often seen in 2019 on the Internet and in our schools, leading to serious emotional and physical issues with counselors on the front lines. Some peers and families find it difficult to handle the depths of these problems. There are real solutions; obstacles can be overcome so you can effectively lead in these areas. Proven solutions will be shared and participants will leave this workshop with new insights and truly useful tools to implement within their school communities.

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- **Transition: Navigating post-secondary choices for students with disabilities**

In a world where everyone discusses college and trade school for high school graduates, what options are available for those students with disabilities who seek a different transition? We will discuss the transition process that is in place at P721, Bronx, Stephen McSweeney School. Our population consists of only students who have been classified with the following disabilities; autism, emotional disturbances, learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities and other medical impairments. Our students are standard assessment and alternative assessment. We will discuss the transition plans/process we offer at our school and discuss our successes.

- **Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans: Development, implementation and the role of the school counselor**

School counselors are an integral part of the Functional Behavior Assessment and the development of the Behavior Intervention Plan. This workshop will help you determine when and how FBAs and BIPs are necessary and developed. This will be done in the context of overall school climate and behavioral expectations. School counselors will walk away with the fundamental skills to work collaboratively with others who are part of this FBA/BIP team process.

- **The Developing Adolescent Brain for School Counselors**

Call them iGen. Many of us know them as one of the most anxious generations to come along. Explore adolescent brain development, how teenagers process information and emotions and current trends affecting today's adolescents. Debunk myths about brain development, and learn about the effect of hormones on adolescent behavior and cognition. After attending this session, you will be able to: 1) Deliver developmentally appropriate school counseling classroom lessons, group activities and individual sessions to address adolescents' social/emotional needs. 2) Design workshops for parents and other stakeholders regarding risk-taking behaviors in adolescents. 3) Advocate for adolescents regarding equitable school policies.

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## **Afternoon Workshops**

### **● 11 things High Schoolers (and Counselors) Should Know When Using Social Media**

Counselors will leave with 11 tips to talk to high school students about when it comes to social media. This course is for social media savvy counselors as well as those with no social media presence. Just as you wouldn't hand a teenager the keys to the car without lessons and insurance, let's not let them tweet without the appropriate guidance. Help your students put their best foot forward online for those college and scholarship applications.

### **● Supporting LGBTQ Students**

Schools must be proactive in creating a school culture that respects and values all students and fosters understanding of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression within the school community. Participants will learn concrete strategies for helping their school become a safer and more affirming environment for LGBTQ students. Risk factors and best practices will be discussed, as well as how to implement relevant NYC DOE and NYSED policy guidelines.

### **● The Calming Power of Crafts**

Scholarly literature connects craft making (e.g., crochet or knitting) with stress reduction. Art therapy is known to help reduce anxiety and depression and boost self-esteem. But we're not art teachers, we're counselors! And, what if you're not artsy or you're intimidated by anything art-related? Then this workshop is for you! In this extremely hands-on session, learn simple, fast and inexpensive crafts that you can easily add to your counselors' tool-box. These activities will calm minds, slow breathing, and enable children (and adults!) to return to a regulated state. We will also explore more involved crafts for those comfortable with crafting.

### **● Self-Advocacy in the College Application Process for Students with Disabilities**

Learn about the differences between disability law and accommodations in high school vs. college, self-advocacy skills, as well as the considerations you may want to discuss with students and families with disabilities as they navigate the college access process.

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### **● Managing Bullying Behavior: The hidden role of trauma**

Schools must treat (not isolate) the bully in order to change the problem of aggression and violence. In an effort to control bullying, schools often fall for the easy temptation to use “zero tolerance” and stricter punishments for acts of aggression and violence.

Without understanding and treating the bully’s hidden source of pain and hurts, we unwittingly perpetuate the traumatic cycle of hurt people hurting people.

This workshop reviews key tenets of trauma theory needed to construct effective anti bullying programs in schools.

- Trauma as setting condition
- Violence research
- Safety, protection and nonviolence
- Norms for compassion
- Perpetrator separation/re-integration
- Case review

### **● Post-Secondary Success: Leveraging the collective power between teachers and school counselors**

Given the silos many school staff operate in within their learning environments, this session will unpack and model how teachers and school counselors can co-collaborate more effectively to create a seamless process for maximizing post-secondary college and career readiness pathways for both general and special education students.