



NATIONAL CENTER for
YOUTH ISSUES

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Speakers Bureau

Leigh Bagwell

SPEAKER AND SCHOOL COUNSELOR



Dr. Leigh Bagwell is a member of the School Counseling Core Faculty in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Capella University. Bagwell joined Capella in the spring of 2022 shortly after completing her doctorate in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Tennessee. She began her career as an elementary and middle school counselor before moving to leadership and supervisory roles in school counseling for preK-12 education in both urban and suburban school districts then ultimately serving as the Director of School Counseling Services for the Tennessee Department of Education. As a school counseling educator and leader, her mission is to provide school counselors and administrators with the training and resources needed to deliver high quality, student driven, data informed comprehensive school counseling programs to all students. She believes when school counselors and school leaders work together to all students have access to the opportunities and supports they need to successfully move through their elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education into their chosen career.

A BRIEF LOOK AT LEIGH'S WORKSHOP / BREAKOUT SESSIONS (continued on the back)

MTSS and School Counseling: Maximizing Supports for Student Success

School counselors work to provide data-driven, evidence-based school counseling programs to impact student achievement, social and personal competencies, and college and career readiness. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is a research-based framework for addressing student needs through effective prevention and intervention strategies. MTSS has been successfully applied to both academic skills and the positive behavior of all students. Traditionally, school counselors have played an important role in these efforts to advocate and serve students; however, the comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP) has not always been identified as a support for the MTSS model. What if school counselors could align their CSCP to the MTSS framework? Let's explore how connecting these two models will help maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of school counselors, provide more meaningful support to students, and advocate for the many ways that school counselors impact student growth, development, and success.

Support Students Struggling with Anxiety and Stress

Anxiety and stress can cause students to feel isolated and overwhelmed, preventing them from learning in the classroom. When students experience anxiety and stress, they need help navigating through it. Rather than tell our students not to worry, our job as educators is to recognize when students are experiencing anxiety and get them the support they need. During this session we will discuss the physiology of anxiety, signs that a student may be in distress, and specific interventions educators can employ to support their students. We will also highlight steps schools can take to prevent an anxious and stressful learning environment. Working together, educators can become powerful advocates for students struggling with anxiety so that they can thrive in the classroom and in life.

Social and Emotional Learning

Our emotions and relationships affect how and what we learn and how we use what we learn in school, work, family, and community contexts. As many schools and districts integrate social and emotional learning frameworks into their classroom instruction, services provided by student support staff can be especially effective in promoting the school success of children who have social, emotional, and mental health problems that interfere with learning. During this session participants will discuss the specific role of school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, school nurses and other student support professionals in supporting the social and emotional learning initiatives that lead to student success.

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Integrating Social and Emotional Learning with Career Development to Prepare College and Career Ready Students.

When preparing students for success in postsecondary education and the workforce it is important that they have academic and content knowledge and training. College and career readiness begins with early exposure and awareness to a broad range of career fields and employability skills. It also includes helping students connect what they are learning in the classroom to their dreams and future career goals. Another important component of college and career readiness is social and emotional development. Self-awareness, self-management and interpersonal skills are critical to students' transition to postsecondary and the workforce.

College and career readiness continues to focus on the development and refinement of both academic and social emotional skills. It also broadens the scope from just knowing about different careers to exploring the high demand opportunities in their communities, aligning personal interests and aptitudes to career fields, and identifying specific pathways to move successfully from secondary to postsecondary to the workforce. These skills will not only prepare them for success in the workplace, but also success in both secondary and postsecondary education.

Because school counseling programs integrate academic preparation, social and emotional development with college and career readiness, school counselors are uniquely positioned to lead this important work. It begins by ensuring that school counselors have strategies and practices that will deepen their students' understanding of the world of work and connect it to their school and life experiences. School counselors will increase their capacity to provide high quality school counseling services and support students as they move along their chosen pathways to and through secondary and postsecondary education and on to the workforce.

College and Career Readiness: K(indergarten) to J(ob)

K-12 Session

What does a successful student look like? What are the skills, knowledge, and experiences our students need to transition effectively from education and training to the workforce? Preparing today's students for tomorrow's workforce goes beyond the traditional career speakers and "careers on wheels" of days past. More than half of our students will pursue a career that has not been developed yet. College and career readiness begins with early exposure and awareness to a broad range of career fields and employability skills. These skills will not only prepare them for success in the workplace, but also success in both secondary and postsecondary education. When students transition from elementary schools to middle and high schools, they also progress from career awareness to career exploration and planning. College and career readiness continues to focus on the development and refinement of employability skills. It also broadens the scope from just knowing about different careers to exploring the high demand opportunities in their communities, aligning personal interests and aptitudes to career fields, and identifying specific pathways to move successfully from secondary to postsecondary to the workforce.

Using school counseling standards as the foundation, we will discuss the profile of a college and career ready student. Participants will leave with specific school counseling strategies and practices that will deepen their students' understanding of the world of work and connect it to their school experience. School counselors will increase their capacity to provide high quality advising and support students as they move along their chosen pathways to and through secondary and postsecondary education and on to the workforce.

Motivational Interviewing: Mission It's Possible - Guiding Students toward Self-Directed Change

Student Services Providers are uniquely positioned to influence students' personal growth, resilience, and readiness for learning. This skill-building workshop introduces the principles and techniques of *Motivational Interviewing (MI)*—a collaborative, strengths-based communication style that enhances students' internal motivation to make positive changes. Through the lens of counseling practice, participants will learn how MI can deepen rapport, reduce resistance, and support students who may be uncertain about steps needed to improve attendance, behavior, academics, social-emotional skills, or overall well-being. Attendees will practice evidenced-based MI strategies through interactive role-plays and case scenarios. Participants will leave better equipped to empower students to identify their own goals, build confidence, and take meaningful steps toward positive change—strengthening both student outcomes and mental health provider-student relationships.

By the end of the session, participants will:

- Strengthen skills in reflective listening, affirmations, and supporting students in expressing their own motivations for change.
- Recognize and skillfully address ambivalence and sustain talk when students feel "stuck."
- Practice MI-informed conversations tailored to developmental levels across K–12.

Brief Solution-Focused Counseling With Motivational Interviewing: Practical Skills for K–12 Student Services Personnel

Student Services Personnel are asked to provide meaningful, effective counseling in extremely limited time—and with students who may be unmotivated, overwhelmed, or resistant. This interactive workshop equips K–12 student serving mental health providers with a practical, student-centered approach that blends *Brief Solution-Focused Counseling (BSFC)* and *Motivational Interviewing (MI)* to create short, powerful sessions that promote real change.

Participants will learn how to use MI's collaborative, autonomy-supportive strategies to reduce resistance and enhance student motivation, then seamlessly transition into solution-focused techniques that help students identify strengths, set desirable goals, and take small, achievable steps toward improvement. The workshop includes demonstrations, practice, and developmentally appropriate tools for elementary, middle, and high school settings.

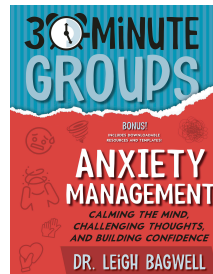
By the end of the session, counselors will be able to:

- Use MI skills (OARS, reflections, change talk) to engage reluctant or ambivalent students.
- Apply core BSFC techniques such as the miracle question, scaling, exception finding, and small-step planning.
- Conduct effective brief integrated counseling sessions tailored to a busy school environment.
- Support students in building intrinsic motivation, confidence, and resilience.

BY LEIGH BAGWELL

30-Minute Groups: Anxiety Management *Calming the Mind, Challenging Thoughts, and Building Confidence*

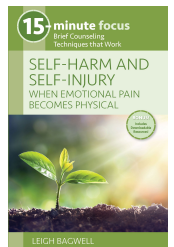
Topics include understanding anxiety, the 4 F's (fight, flight, freeze, and fawn), the brain science of anxiety, coping skills, and more. The lessons help students get curious about anxiety and learn tips and techniques they can incorporate into their thoughts, words, and behaviors.



15-Minute Focus: Self-Harm and Self-Injury *When Emotional Pain Becomes Physical*

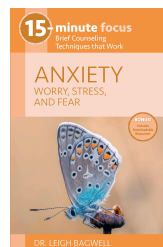
Bagwell offers an in-depth look at the who, what, and why of self-harm; more accurately called nonsuicidal self-injury (NSSI).

This book features stories from students as they explain NSSI from their experiences, giving adults an inside look into the lives of those who struggle with this behavior.



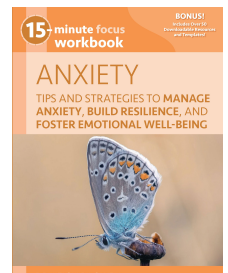
15-Minute Focus: Anxiety *Worry, Stress, and Fear*

In this book, Bagwell explains the physiological progression from a trigger to a full-blown anxiety attack, and provides a variety of prevention and intervention strategies for school counselors, educators, and administrators.



15-Minute Focus: Anxiety Workbook *Tips and Strategies to Manage Anxiety, Build Resilience, and Foster Emotional Well-Being*

Filled with age-appropriate examples, practical resources, and interactive exercises, in this workbook you will discover knowledge and tools to demystify anxiety, navigate the “why,” become an effective advocate, and empower students with coping skills.



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