



**Counseling and Mental Health Services** is a program of study within the **Human Services Career Cluster**. A Career Cluster is a grouping of occupations and broad industries based on commonalities. There are 16 Career Clusters.

Career clusters link what students learn in school with the knowledge and skills they need for success in college and careers. The Human Services cluster prepares individuals for employment in career pathways related to families and human needs.

There are five programs of study in this cluster:

- Consumer Services
- Counseling and Mental Health Services
- Early Childhood Development and Services
- Family and Community Services
- Personal Care Services

## Employment Outlook

**Counselors** provide therapy for people dealing with issues like substance abuse, behavioral disorders, mental health, and marriage and family. Demand for Counselors should grow much faster than average through the year 2016 as people become increasingly comfortable with seeking professional help. Also, insurance companies will likely offer more employee reimbursement programs for counseling as an alternative to more expensive psychologists' and psychiatrists' services. More people will use counseling services as society focuses on ways to develop mental well-being, such as controlling work related stress and balancing family responsibilities. Nationally, salaries for mental health counselors range from \$23,580 to \$63,100 and for Marriage and Family Therapists from less than \$27,810 to more than \$70,830 (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-2009).

## Using this brochure

Inside you will find a suggested **program of study** that has lots of helpful information. The model is an example of the types of courses and extended learning experiences that are important for the **Counseling and Mental Health Services Program of Study**. Use this model to plan your course schedule, educational experiences, and career choices.

At the top of the model, you will find **career goals** with the corresponding **O\*NET code**. The O\*NET code is an official classification of jobs and can be used to locate career-related information. Your teacher, counselor, or media center should be able to help you locate further information.

The upper left side of the model highlights the **core courses and career-related electives** in high school that will help prepare you for your career goal. This model is based upon the Recommended High School Graduation Plan and can easily be adapted for the Distinguished Achievement High School Graduation Plan.

The upper right side of the model highlights examples of **extended learning experiences** that can enhance your knowledge and skills for your career goal. You will find examples of curricular activities, such as participation in Career and Technical Student Organizations like FCCLA, career learning experiences, service learning activities, and extracurricular activities.

The lower left side of the model indicates **industry licensures/certifications** and **on-the-job training experiences** that may be available while still in high school. This section also highlights the various levels of **postsecondary education** and examples of **career options** available to you once you have completed that level of education and training.

The lower right side of the model contains examples of **professional associations** available for counseling and mental health professionals. Many of these organizations allow preprofessional membership while enrolled in a postsecondary program. Most organizations have websites which can be easily located by entering the organization name in available search engines.

## Thinking about a career in Marriage and Family Therapy?



<http://www.achievetexas.org>

This program of study may be for you! Counselors assist people with personal, family, educational, mental health, and career decisions and problems. They modify people's perceptions and behaviors, enhance communication, and promote understanding among family members. Look inside to see suggested coursework and learning opportunities that will prepare you for an exciting and rewarding career.

