

The Need for Advisement

All humans share a common set of basic social and emotional needs that must be met within the context of society's institutions. The family is the key institution for meeting these needs; for a growing number of students, the school runs a close second. Everyone, regardless of station in life, is destined to fulfill five basic needs: survival, belonging, power, freedom and fun. The basic needs may also be described as the need to be:

- loved and accepted
- secure and relatively free of threat
- part of a group
- approved and recognized for the way in which we function
- learning independence, responsibility and decision making

The degree that these basic needs are adequately met, contributes to people becoming strong citizens and productive workers.

Today's school is a complex place with increased demands, requirements and options, as society has become more competitive for college entrance and skilled jobs. At Barrington High School, we want students to be successful in school and in life, thus the experiences that make up their education must help meet each student's basic needs. It is in this context that advisement becomes a viable strategy.

Belonging means students feel they are part of the school or they have a reason to belong. When students know someone in school cares about them and wants them to succeed, they feel they belong.

Power and independence often result from achievement and recognition. When students succeed in academic classes or in student activities, they satisfy their need for power and independence. If they do not succeed in these areas, they look for other ways to satisfy this need.

Freedom results when students have opportunities to make decisions. Having a voice about what is done in school satisfies this need.

Fun is a favorite need because it makes so much sense. Humor is something without which none of us can live. School does not have to be drudgery; we all work harder when we enjoy what we are doing.

An Advisory program works to meet these needs. Students BELONG to an advisory group. They gain POWER in their relationships with the teacher/adviser and student mentors who know them as "total human beings." They gain FREEDOM as they express their thoughts and opinions, share concerns and plan for their future. They have FUN with advisory group activities.

As staff at Barrington High School work to satisfy basic student needs, we reduce the likelihood of disruption, disorder and failure. Positive advisory relationships spill over into the regular classrooms to influence the entire school climate so students are successful academically, socially and emotionally.