#### Spring 2009

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## Advocating for the Profession IS About the Children

~ Doug Hauserman, NSCA President, school counselor at Westside High School

I was reading an article in the newspaper a couple months ago about the top five issues facing our state. I remember three of those issues very clearly: 1) keeping Nebraska's best and brightest in the state after they graduate 2) the issue of helping families in crisis that was brought to everyone's attention due to the safe haven law 3) raising the level of academic achievement of Nebraska's youth. It struck me that school counselors play a role in these three key issues facing our state. Other issues that have been in the spotlight in our state in 2009 that school counselors are involved in are teen dating violence and sexting (be sure to read Yolanda Martin's article in this newsletter about sexting). Clearly, school counselors play a critical role in children's lives and therefore the future of our state and nation.

Contemplating these issues lead me to realize that while we as school counselors know our importance and understand how these issues relate to what we do, most people including key stake holders do not. We as school counselors have an amazing opportunity to tie into conversations about these issues with parents, administrators, teachers and school board members and educate them about the school counseling profession and how we are part of the solution to these issues. Through our conversations stakeholders need to be educated on the fact that we work with all students in the areas of academics, career, and personal/social. They need to understand that school counselors are the only professionals in schools that have training both in mental health and education. This training and applying it to all three domains is precisely why so many current issues in our state tie into what we do on a daily basis.

As a general rule, school counselors aren't very good about talking up what we do. Most of us went into school counseling for the children and we pretty much put our needs much further down the list of priorities. The problem is, now more than ever with hard economic times and schools facing challenging budget issues, school counselors can't afford not to advocate for the profession. The reality is children stand to lose our services if we are not in the schools and at ratios that allow us to do our jobs. Failure to advocate for ourselves **is** about the children. We all have an obligation to educate and advocate for the profession.

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Start with the simple things. Have conversations with your principal, superintendent, school board members and state legislator if you have a personal relationship with him/her. Write letters to your state and national elected officials about issues that effect children and the profession. These are all things that take very little time but make a difference. Then take the next step and do a presentation on the profession to your whole school board or take advantage of these current hot topics to present to local community clubs, PTA's, and other organizations. You will be surprised at how little they understand about school counseling and how much more they will appreciate what you do. Finally and most importantly if you haven't implemented the ASCA model begin that process now. The model will help you show others with data what we already know: school counselors matter and have a positive impact on student achievement. Far more importantly, implementing the ASCA model will benefit your students by maximizing your efforts in doing what you are trained to do. Both ASCA and NSCA are prepared to help you advocate for school counseling programs and the profession. All you have to do is let both organizations know and they will help. Finally check out the advocacy section of the NSCA website www.neschoolcounselor.org to see was NSCA is doing and to learn how you can help.

## Counselor List Serve

Many of you may already be members of the school counselor list serve. If not, we encourage you to join. The list serve helps counselors to get quick answers to questions as they arise. Here is a recent email regarding sample brochures counselors can modify. The tip came from Doug Hauserman.

There are several sample brochures from across the country that anyone can access on the ASCA Scene. The ASCA Scene is a free professional networking site offered by ASCA and you do not need to be an ASCA member to access it. To access the sample brochures do the following:

1. Go to http://www.schoolcounselor.org

2. Click on the ASCA SCENE link on the lower left hand corner (you will need to set up a free account if you haven't already joined) (I do not get junk mail as a result of doing this only an occasional e-mail letting me know of recent activity on The ASCA SCENE)

3. Log into The Scene and click on the "File Cabinet"

4. Several File Folders will come up - Click on the "High School Counseling" one. Towards the bottom of the files are several brochures. The ASCA scene has many other wonderful resources including the ability to post questions and get responses from across the country. Be sure to check it out.

## **NSCA Website Update**

Check out NSCA's updated website at <u>www.neschoolcounselor.org</u>. The website contains information on professional development opportunities, school counselor resources, advocacy, current national and state legislative happenings, electronic copies of NSCA newsletters, and information about NSCA happenings. Check it out and keep current on school counselor happenings.

#### **NSCA Board Members**

Doug Hauserman, President DouglasJ66@gmail.com

Tracy Post, President Elect tpost@bpsne.org

Belva Licht, Secretary blicht@westside66.org

Phyllis Trumble, Treasurer Phyllis.trumble@ops.org

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Vicky Munoz, Secondary VP mvmunoz@mpsomaha.org

Rynette Friesen, Middle School VP rlFriesen@mpsomaha.org

Nancy Bond, Elementary VP Nancy.bond@ops.org

#### Yes, Our Plates Are Full

~ Belva Licht, NSCA Secretary

**Our plates are full!** However, I'm hoping there are some of you who may be ready to invest time into the state organization 'portion' of your profession. Getting involved does take commitment; getting involved has rewards!

**The more the merrier!** Most committees have one or two projects that take up their time. With more people on the committee, the workload is divided and the work is more fun.

Get in your two cents worth! Your ideas and opinions are important. When you volunteer, you represent your school and your area of Nebraska. We need you.

Haven't met a school counselor I didn't' like. We are nice and fun people! It is a reward to meet fellow counselors from around the state. It's a chance to network and to make friends.

Had enough clichés? One more...

**Take one step at a time!** That first step could be volunteering to work with one of the NSCA committees. We have ten from which to chose: Nominations & Elections, Programs, Membership, Publication, Professional Standards, Bylaws, Government Relations, Professional Recognition, Technology, and Public Relations. Because you are unique and different, some of you will have an interest in one area and not another. No problem! Contact either Doug Hauserman or Tracy Post, tell them what interests you, and let them suggest the right committee.

Please consider getting involved. Next step: NSCA Governing Board!

# **Red Cross Training Now Open To School Counselors**

Last summer after educational efforts by the American School Counselor Association and other organizations, the American Red Cross announced that school counselors are eligible to take their Disaster Mental Health Training class. Completion of the class allows participants to respond to disasters both small and large as a Red Cross respondent. The Disaster Mental Health class is 6.5 hours long, not including breaks. A person who completes the training gets to control the extent, if any, that they wish to volunteer. Red Cross volunteers who complete this training can choose to respond to large scale national disasters such as hurricanes or much smaller things such as a local house fire in which a pet died. Whether we are talking about Hurricane Katrina or a local family whose house burned if children are involved there are often school issues as well as issues of trauma. Who is better trained to help with both of these than school counselors? This training would also be good supplemental training to school counselors who serve on crisis response teams in their districts. For more information contact the nearest Red Cross chapter. If you are interested in receiving this training, please let NSCA President, Doug Hauserman or President Elect, Tracy Post know. If there is enough interest, the Red Cross has indicated that they would like work with NSCA to provide that training for a group of school counselors.

#### **ASCA SCENE is Great Resource**

The ASCA SCENE is an online professional networking resource that is provided by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) at no cost to users. By signing up for this free service you are automatically connected to school counselors across the country. You can post questions and get responses to learn how your situation is being handled in other regions of the country. Recent topic include: difficult parents, school counselor evolution, student loan forgiveness, dealing with cutters, peer mentoring programs, and school counseling notes software. Additionally there is an electronic file cabinet with documents in over 30 different school counseling topics. If you haven't already done so, check out this awesome resource by going to www.schoolcounselor.org and click on the link in the lower left hand corner for the ASCA SCENE.

#### Integrating Immigrant Students and Their Families Within School Communities

~ Debra L. Ponce, Ed.D., NCC

Nebraska has reported a significant growth in the area of Latino immigration within various areas of the state. Increasingly P-12 schools are faced with immigrant students who do not speak English, have little understanding of formalized education, and know even less about mainstream American culture. Often the schools and districts (usually private or rural) are under-prepared to meet the needs of these students and their families. Schools need insight regarding meeting the cultural needs of immigrant students and their families along with a foundational plan of action that comprises understanding the goals of American education, language acquisition, and integration into American society.

In 2005, Omaha Public Schools first announced that minority populations actually comprised the majority of students enrolled within its schools. The author was immersed for one semester in one of its elementary schools known for its exemplary work with immigrant students and their families. The elementary school has approximately 650 students of which 84% are Hispanic, 80% qualify for free or reduced lunch, and 60% are English Language Learners. The majority of the professional teacher's aides within each classroom are Hispanic, however, 78% of the teachers are Caucasian with an average of 11 years of teaching. The school has met AYP for the previous two years.

The author's interaction with students and their families, faculty, staff and administration throughout the immersion experience led to key ideas which support the building of authentic relationships within school communities. Although the principal and school counselors are pivotal in assisting with the integration of these key ideas and activities, collaboration with the entire professional staff is imperative for successful implementation. It has been suggested that the principal and school counselor greet parents and students daily, be visible, work to unify staff and parents, visit the home-school liaison room often, participate in family celebrations, and acknowledge the efforts of parents school.

#### Activities and Insights for Students

#### Preschool Family Fun Day

During the first week of classes, the students do not come to school on a regular basis. Each has an appointment for an assessment to determine into which pre-school class the student will be placed. At the end of the week, the parents attend the family fun day with their child.

#### Seeds for Success

A team of Kindergarten teachers and aides, along with the principal and counselor, offers program sessions on three Saturdays from 9-11AM for students and their parents. The program sessions included:

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independence and routines; literacy (take-home book program) and reading skills; and safety.

#### Dual-Language Program

Dual language program is offered from Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Students enter a lottery in kindergarten and then are able to continue in the dual language through 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The students may also then choose to attend a middle school and high school that offer dual language programs. *After-School Remedial Tutoring Program* 

A Remedial Tutoring Program is offered after school on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Typically the student invited to attend are those who struggled or did not meet AYP for the previous year. The attendance rate is approximately 95% of those invited.

#### Saturday School

Saturday School is offered for invited students. Fall sessions included: math club, quilting as an art form and math, and Get Fit, Stay Fit (for those referred by PE teachers). Saturday School if offered from 9AM-12Noon on most Saturdays and attendance typically is upwards of 95% of those registered. Classes are also offered for remediation.

#### Activities and Insights for Parents

#### Principal's Coffee

The principal offers a Principal's Coffee on the first Friday of each month. Parents are invited to come to school and visit with the principal about various concerns, participate in a program designed to meet their specific needs, or take a field trip to learn more about their community at large.

#### Home-School Liaison – Family Room

This elementary school employs a Home-School Liaison for its immigrant students and their families. In this capacity, she translates for parents and faculty when needed, attends IEP conferences, introduces parents to the building, and assists with parent/teacher conferences. The Home-School Liaison is also in charge of the Parent/Family Room within the school. This room has materials in English and Spanish for checkout by the parents and families. She assists with filling out forms that are only in English. In addition, it is a place for parents to meet and make friends. The families whose students are enrolled in the dual language program must commit to 20 hours of volunteering each year to assist with making and organizing materials for the program.

#### ESL/GED Classes

Gomez Heritage offers ESL and GED classes for parents.

#### **Tips for Success**

Schools with immigrant students and families are encouraged to create a climate of high expectations, utilize a total family approach when addressing school issues and concerns, and offer multiple means of communication with the family in their native language. It is also important to know the cultural attributes of the individuals with whom you are working and to welcome them throughout the school.

School counselors encourage sensitivity training for all faculty and staff members especially in understanding both verbal and non-verbal communication; immersion experiences (brief or extended) for increased positive interaction among professional school staff and immigrant families; and home visits. In addition, grant writing training is suggested so that specialized programming can be offered that is tailored to the needs of the school community.

Authentic relationships among immigrant students and their families and school professionals are wanted, needed, and valued. Strong parental support and committed staff members enable all students to be successful and reach their highest potential.

## Why Get Involved with NSCA

~ Phyllis Trumble

I was called one day by Bonnie Korkow about three years ago, and she asked me to take the position of secretary for NSCA for the coming year. I told her that was not my best area and I thought it would end there. Wrong! She then asked me to be the treasurer, which is a job I had done before, so I said yes. I then thought what was I thinking I really don't need something else to do. I was now committed and proceeded going to meeting and began to learn about my new job. I was quite lost at first but I loved the people I was working with. They came from every corner of the state and I learned something new every time I attended a meeting. I found everyone on the board had the same goals as I did, to help children succeed. What a great opportunity to work with a group that has the ability to help our children all over the state. The organization has been growing by having great leadership as well as dedicated board members. I am asking you to think about joining our group or consider getting involved. I know many of you have offered to help and you will be called on to use your skills to help us make this group stronger and better for future generations. We have lots of committees, which would be more than happy to hear from you. So, let us hear from you we have a lot to do.

#### **NSCA Membership**

NSCA continues to work hard to advance the school counseling profession and support Nebraska's School Counselors. Our strength and ability to do that comes from our members. More members equals a stronger voice with lawmakers and more funds for all the services we provide including this newsletter. NSCA also strives to provide the very best in professional development for school counselor through events like the School Counselor Academy. Your membership does get you discounted rates to all professional development events sponsored by NSCA. For compete information on what NSCA does visit our website www.neschoolcounselor.org. Please consider joining NSCA. We are a division of the NCA so to join either go the NCA website www.necounseling.org or complete the NCA application included in this newsletter. Make sure you choose to join NSCA for \$15 under the list of divisions. The application follows on page 7

#### Hauserman and Post Attend APPI Conference

~Tracy Post, NSCA President Elect

March 8-10 Doug Hauserman and I had the opportunity to attend the American School Counselor Association sponsored Advocacy and Public Policy Institute (APPI) in Washington D.C. The APPI is a training institute designed to help and empower school counselors to advocate for school counseling programs/issues. The first day of APPI we listened to panels discuss policy and lobbying activities at the state level, emerging issues affecting school counselors and current legislation affecting school counselors. During the second day of APPI we visited Capitol Hill and spent time in each of the congressman's offices. We were fortunate enough for Congressman Terry to take time out of his busy schedule to visit with us.

At each office we visited we discussed issues facing school counselors at the local, state and national level. Some of the bills that we advocated for were the Increased Student Achievement through Increased Student Support Act, introduced by Rep. Towns (D-NY), the Pathways to College Act introduced by Sen. Durbin (D-IL) and the Positive Behavior for Safe and Effective Schools Act introduced by Rep. Hare (D-IL). It was a great experience advocating for all school counselors and I encourage every school counselor to advocate for their profession at the local, state and national level.

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Mail To; NCA Membership PO Box 489 Boys Town, NE 68010 Or, Visit us on the web at <u>www.necounseling.org</u> to register with your credit card!

There shall be no discrimination against any individual on the basis of ethnicity, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age and/or disability.

Date://	District#:	Membership Renewal	New Membership
Mrs./Ms./Mr./Dr. (Last)		(First)	(MI)
Mailing Address			
City:	Sta	te: Zip Code:	
Phone: ()	Cell Phone	: ()	_
E-Mail Address (Primary):			
E-Mail Address (Secondary): _			
Optional:			
Work Address:			
City:		State: Zip Code:	
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NSCA \$15 NAMCD \$10			ed to provide the s of our members
NMHCA \$10			liaison. Periodically
NASGW \$ 5		office emails legi	
NACES \$ 5		concerning area	
NASERVIC \$ 5		counseling, and	
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NCASAOB \$ 5 NAMFC \$ 5			
φο		THANK YOU!	
TOTAL PAYMENT: \$			

Please make checks payable to: The Nebraska Counseling Association or NCA

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#### "Sexting" in Nebraska

~Yolanda Martin,Andersen Middle School

If you have read the Omaha World Herald in recent weeks or followed any of the national news stories about "sexting" and thought we have nothing to worry about in Nebraska, think again. Teenage flirting has gone beyond the innocent flirtations to a shocking new tendency of sending nude or semi-nude photos from cell phone to cell phone. Instead of "texting," teens call it "sexting." Our young people, although technologically savvy, are naïve to think that only one person will see the revealing message. Impulsively provocative behavior wins over common sense when it comes to this type of messaging. The accessibility to the technology is here, and at an early age, our children are playing with their lives. With cell phone cameras, preteens and teens have been given a device so easy to use for some it's impossible to ignore the temptations.

Once pictures are taken and the SEND button pushed, the sexually explicit photographs may be shared with friends and classmates. Sexting is not just occurring in Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Texas as news stories filter out of those states. It is happening in the great state of Nebraska, too. Some authorities across the nation are charging teenagers with child pornography and obscenity. What happens in Nebraska is yet to be seen. Roughly 20 percent of teens admit to participating in "sexting," according to a nationwide survey by the National Campaign to Support Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. Once a sexting message has been sent, that person may automatically upload it to his/her Facebook or MySpace page. Teens don't realize the seriousness of one sexting message and the dangers of inappropriate behavior. It is disturbing to grasp the magnitude of this trend.

The nonprofit National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy has been researching this issue. Director Marisa Nightingale says it's crucial that parents talk to their children about potential consequences, because while criminal charges are rare, compromising photos could easily come back to haunt the teens when they apply for college or their first job. "Even if it doesn't result in something official, they can get really humiliated and find something they thought was a joke can become something that haunts them for years," says Nightingale.

One of the appeals of sexting is the ability to hide teens' behavior from parents who do not know the new cell phone features and lingo. As technology continues to change the ways teens communicate, parents need to monitor their children's cell phones. If parents don't know how to access the information on a cell phone, they must learn. It is vital that parents sit down and talk to their teenagers about the seriousness of this new wave of

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flirtation. Get involved. Don't be afraid to take your child's phone and look through it – text messages and pictures. We are a team, and we have to work together from this point on. Our children's lives depend on it.



ASCA Conference in Dallas

The American School Counselor Association Annual Conference is June 28<sup>th</sup> through July 1<sup>st</sup> at the Hyatt Regency Dallas at Reunion. June 28<sup>th</sup> starts with pre-conference workshops that are either a half day or full day in length. These pre-conference workshops really allow for a deeper level of exploration and growth than your standard conference

breakout session. The opening keynote is in the early evening of the 28<sup>u</sup>. Outstanding keynotes, breakout sessions, and numeours opportunities to network with 2000+ school counselors from not only across the country but from around the world continue through noon on July 1st. For more information on the conference and to get registration materials go to www.schoolcounselor.org.

# Spotlight on NSCA

#### An Interview with Marje Little, Counselor at Hastings Middle School by Jan Carper

# What is your proudest accomplishment as a counselor?

Establishing a curriculum for 7th and 8th grade guidance and developing a relationship with our core teams that opened the door for us to have regular time with ALL students weekly.

# What are the biggest challenges that you face?

Time and lack of family structure. As our society changes, it seems that we expect middle school students to be adults, and they need help making that transition. Too often our students are the caretakers of others in their homes and carry the burden of adult responsibilities.

# What is your favorite classroom guidance activity?

*Reality Store* is the culmination of many career lessons and a really fun activity for students, volunteers and staff members. This is a joint activity that brings all 8th grade teachers together with a large cross section of professionals from the community.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time? Playing with grandchildren, walking, reading, golfing, playing bridge, cookingand entertaining.

#### An Interview with Carmen Hippen from Millard North High School by Vicky Munoz

# What is your proudest accomplishment as a counselor?

Most recently, I have been closely working with a student who was failing every class. He has responded extremely well to the interventions we put in place. He was recently honored as one of our most improved students!

# What are the biggest challenges that you face?

The biggest challenge is finding enough time to focus on all of the things that we know help students succeed on both an academic and personal level.

# What is your favorite classroom guidance activity?

I enjoy teaching the True Colors® lesson. It is amazing to watch students have those "ah-ha" moments when they realize why some of their relationships work well and why other relationships pose challenges.

#### What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

It's hard to find a spare moment, but I do enjoy traveling, reading, and skiing.

## Save the Date! Nebraska School Counselor Academy 2009

~Jan Carper, NSCA Governing Board Member

Mark your calendars to attend the second annual 2009 NSCA School Counselor Academy in October. The 2009 Academy will be held on the beautiful campus of Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, October 15-16, 2009.

The 2008 NSCA School Counselor Academy in Omaha was amazing in so many ways! We anticipate building upon this success to offer another outstanding academy in 2009. Money that is raised by the 2009 Academy will be used to benefit school counselors and the school counseling profession across Nebraska.

Here's what you can look forward to at the 2009 NSCA Counselor Academy:

- Nationally recognized keynote speakers
- · Multiple break-out sessions for exceptional professional growth and development
- The chance to network with approximately 300 of your fellow school counselors
- An opportunity to visit nearly 50 exhibitors

Registration information will be in future newsletters. Mark your calendars so you won't miss out on this wonderful professional development opportunity for school counselors.

Your Governing Board is committed to meeting the professional development needs of all school counselors. We value your input and look to you for ways to improve professional growth offerings in our valued profession. Please contact any NSCA governing board member with your professional development suggestions and ideas.

#### 2009 NSCA Academy Lodging

NSCA has reserved blocks of rooms for Academy attendees at Union College and the Lincoln South Heritage Hampton Inn. We predict that the Union College rooms will fill up fast so recommend attendees make reservations in a timely manner.

Union College has a limited number of standard hotel guest rooms available on campus for \$55/night. Please note that all guest rooms are non-smoking only. There are several RV sites available for \$10/night. A limited number of guest suites may also be available. For more information about reservations, please call the Union College Ortner Center direct: 402-486-2545. The suites at Union College provide all the amenities of a more expensive hotel for a fraction of the price. To view photographs or for more information about the location, please visit: <a href="http://www.ucollege.edu/ortner">http://www.ucollege.edu/ortner</a> <a href="http://www.ucollege.edu/ortner">http://www.ucollege.edu/ortner</a>

A block of rooms at the Lincoln South Heritage Hampton Inn has been reserved at a special rate of \$78 (plus tax) for October 14 through 16. Mention the Nebraska School Counselor Association Academy to get this rate. Rooms are limited so be sure to make your reservations soon. Call the hotel direct: 402-420-7800 or Central Reservations: 1-800-HAMPTON. Reservations may also be made at the Hampton Inn website. Go to www.LincolnSouthHeeritagePark.Hamptoninn.com (must enter group code SCA).

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It's the end of the year and students are (finally!) done filling out their applications, requesting transcripts, and writing the "perfect" scholarship essays. As seniors finalize their post-secondary plans, it is important for families to discuss the transition from high school to college. High School counselors can facilitate such conversations by providing timely tips and examples of issues for families to discuss. Though the following handout was developed for a fall college planning night, many of the discussion points can still be used by parents as well as counselors helping families through the transition period.

## Helping Your Student Develop ASSETS through the College Planning Process: A Parent's Guide

#### Allow your student to experience the admissions process.

Parents should provide encouragement. However, a student who experiences the challenges of organizing application materials, speaking to college/university representatives, and handling acceptances and rejections will be far more prepared to navigate through life as a college/university freshman. *Assets: Empowerment, Social Competencies* 

# **S** tay focused on helping your student find the best fit.

Though it might not be your first choice, a student who selects a post-secondary institution that matches his/her academic and personal interests will more likely experience success. *Asset: Commitment to Learning, Positive Identity* 

#### **S** tay informed about campus resources.

If your student experiences academic or personal challenges it is helpful to know where he/she can go for help *ahead* of time. Many campuses have counseling and academic support centers. Asset: Commitment to Learning, Support

## ducate your student about the changes he/she will experience.

Let your student know about the freedom and responsibilities that come with leaving home. *Assets: Constructive Use of Time, Positive Identity, Positive Values* 

#### ake tours and visit campuses. It is a worthwhile investment.

It is better to visit a college once or twice than experience the heartache and expenses associated with transferring. *Assets: Commitment to Learning, Positive Identity* 

#### **S** et boundaries for your student.

Describe your expectations for your student's spending, grades, and behavior while at college. Also discuss and

rules and curfews when he/she comes home to visit. While your student might not be perfect about following these boundaries, clear communication and consequences will benefit your relationship. *Asset: Boundaries and Expectations* 



## **Important Dates to Remember**

June 9-11 – NCE Conference, Kearney NE Oct. 15-16 Nebraska School Counselor Academy, Lincoln, NE



**D. HAUSERMAN** 4613 N. 148<sup>th</sup> Street Omaha, NE 68116