# Chapter 6

## School Social Work Services

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## Chapter 6: School Social Work Services

### Objective
To identify best practice intervention strategies utilized by school social workers to remove barriers that prevent students from receiving optimal benefit from educational opportunities.

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**Individual Services**

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### Attendance

#### *Introduction*
Students must be in attendance at school in order to learn. School social workers are well-suited to address truancy issues. School social workers are skilled in identifying barriers to school attendance and working with family systems and community agencies to collaboratively problem solve these barriers.

#### *Rationale*
Chronic absenteeism may prevent children from reaching early learning milestones. According to the Minnesota Department of Education, In 2015, 13 percent of 1st-12th grade students were chronically absent from school, meaning they missed more than 10 percent of school days. Children who are chronically absent in preschool, kindergarten, and first grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the third grade. Students who cannot read at grade level by the end of third grade are four times more likely than proficient readers to drop out of high school. (MDE: https://mn.gov/mmb/results-for-children/supporting-indicators/learning-environments/chronic-absenteeism.jsp)

Irregular attendance can be a better predictor of whether students will drop out before graduation than test scores. A study of public school students in Utah found that an incidence of chronic absenteeism in even a single year between 8th and 12th grade was associated with a seven-fold increase in the likelihood of dropping out  (University of Utah, 2012).

Frequent absences from school can shape adulthood. High school dropout, which chronically absent students are more likely to experience, has been linked to poor outcomes later in life, from poverty and diminished health to involvement in the criminal justice system (U.S. Department of Education: https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html#two)

#### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*
In Minnesota students between the ages of 7 and 16 must attend school. "A child is considered a 'habitual truant' if she or he is under the age of 16 years and is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days or for one or more class periods on seven school days. Children ages 16 and 17 will be considered truant if they have not lawfully withdrawn from school with their parents' permission" (See  Minn. Stat. 120A.22 subd 5A; Minn. Stat.  260A, Minn. Stat  260C.007 subd 19). County attorneys interpret statutes on education in different ways, so specific enforcement varies from one county to another.School social workers need to understand attendance and truancy procedures for the county and school district where they work.

### *Key Elements of Successful Programs*

Chronic student absenteeism has multiple contributing factors, including family mobility, mental health issues, poor communication between home and school, and weak student-teacher relationships (Blazer, 2011; Chang & Romero, 2008; Sugrue et al., 2016). As with other student concerns, intervention must follow a systematic assessment to identify the problems that are interfering with student attendance and the development of a plan to address those issues (Kim & Streeter, 2006). Punitive programs do not appear successful, in and of themselves, but a collaboration of community and legal agencies that provide predictable consequences, parent involvement, rewards student's attendance and provides needed social services to students and families, has shown success (Baker et al, 2001; Dupper, 2003). Intervention must be multi-modal, addressing school issues that alienate students, family conditions that discourage attendance and student issues that get in the way of school participation (Kim & Streeter, 2006).

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**Literature, References, Models, and Websites**

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School Attendance Matters Ramsey County: School Attendance Matters

Attendance Works: 10 Facts About School Attendance

Stearns County: Information for Schools, Truancy, Juvenile Delinquency and Child Protection

Attendance Awareness: Why Attendance Matters for Achievement and How Interventions Can Help

**Behavior Intervention Plans**

*Introduction*
School social workers often are integrally involved in developing Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs). BIPs are documented specific plans that describe interventions developed to address goals for social, emotional, and behavioral development in the IEP process.

*Rationale*
Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and BIPs were first mandated in IDEA 1997 and reauthorized in 2004 to provide safeguards for students with behavioral disabilities (Kelly et al., 2016). The purpose is to assess behavior problems and determine the purpose that these inappropriate behaviors serve in meeting needs, so as to identify more acceptable behaviors the student can use instead. By identifying the purpose of problematic behaviors, the multidisciplinary team can provide direct and indirect services to the student that enhance his or her chances of success.

*Determining When to Use This Intervention*
BIPs can be used whenever a student's behavior causes difficulties in the school setting as part of the holistic assessment. Performing an FBA and developing a BIP are mandated by IDEA whenever a student is identified as having emotional/behavioral disabilities that might lead to a suspension or expulsion from school.

*Key Elements of Successful Programs*
BIPs are developed by multidisciplinary IEP teams following a careful, functional behavioral assessment that determines the antecedents, specific descriptions of problem behaviors, consequences or rewards of the behaviors, and the possible functions the behaviors serve for the student. BIPs have clearly developed goals and objectives that are described in measurable terms and describe desirable behaviors that might substitute for the undesirable

behaviors targeted for change. The BIP should list strategies to increase positive behavior and decrease negative behavior (including planned discipline, if any) as well as strategies for generalizing the behavior changes. The BIP also lists the ways the behavior plan will be monitored, including the frequency and timing of data collection regarding the behavior in question and the way information will be communicated to parents and others. Progress in meeting goals is used to monitor the plan, and if sufficient progress is not made, the BIP should be changed to reflect new information (Kelly et al., 2016).

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National Center on Intensive Intervention: Behavior Strategies to Support Intensifying Interventions

NASP: State Laws for Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans

## Cognitive Behavioral Interventions

### *Introduction*
Cognitive-behavioral interventions teach students strategies for managing thoughts and feelings that interfere with functioning. These interventions are based on the premise that thinking, behavior and emotions are inexorably linked; changes in one will lead to attending changes in the others. Social workers have the skills to provide cognitive-behavioral interventions in addressing student needs. There are a number of related techniques that fall under the rubric of cognitive-behavioral interventions and have been shown to be effective in treating many school-based problems.

### *Rationale*
For students with the cognitive ability to examine their thinking, cognitive-behavioral interventions strategies have been well documented as effective in helping individual students change (Dupper, 2002; Chiu et al., 2013; Tomb & Hunter, 2006; Tracy & Usaj, 2007). Based on the assumption that thoughts, emotions and behavior are linked together, cognitive-behavioral interventions seek to help students change their thinking about themselves or their problems in order to change the accompanying emotional states and behaviors.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*
Cognitive-behavioral interventions are often effective for students with the cognitive ability to examine their thinking. They have been used effectively to help children with conduct disorder (Springer & Lynch, 2006), Oppositional Defiant Disorder (Linseisen, 2006), anxiety disorders (Tomb & Hunter, 2006), social problem-solving (Dupper, 2003; Tracy & Usaj, 2007), and depression (Corcoran & Hanvey-Phillips, 2006).

### Key Elements of Successful Programs
A careful assessment of student needs and identification of goals precedes any ongoing work with the student. The use of Cognitive Behavior Technique should be flexible, sensitive and developmentally appropriate (Tomb & Hunter, 2006). After determining treatment goals, an individualized treatment plan is developed to address student needs. Cognitive behavioral techniques include self-instruction, modeling, rehearsal, coaching, feedback, cognitive restructuring, managing negative self-talk, systematic desensitization, relaxation training, reframing negative situations into a more positive light, visualizing success, thought-stopping, analyzing the rationality of thoughts, role-playing and behavioral reinforcement (Dupper, 2003; Tomb & Hunter, 2006; Toseland & Rivas, 2005; Tracy & Usaj, 2007).

Typically, students are taught skills through direct instruction, modeling and role play during individual or group sessions.  Students are then given homework assignments to provide opportunities to apply the newly-learned skills in the classroom or in interaction with others. Then the homework is reviewed in subsequent sessions, feedback is given and the skills are refined. Student progress should be monitored throughout the treatment to assure that the intervention program is successful.

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Second Step: Second Step Program | Second Step

SAMHSA: Cognitive Behavior Therapy Part 1

Insight & Outlook: Functional Thinking Curriculum

Bounce Back: An Elementary School Intervention for Childhood Trauma

Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools: CBITS

Department of Veterans Affairs, South Central Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC): A Therapist's Guide to Brief Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Creating Opportunities for Personal Empowerment (COPE): Manuals & training resources for CBT in the classroom


## Crisis Intervention

### Introduction
Comprehensive school social work practice in the area of crisis intervention seeks to both prevent and respond to traumatic events and tragedies when they impact individuals or groups of students and/or the broader school community, whether those events occur internally or externally to the school environment. While school social work expertise is often sought for crisis counseling and support for students, school social workers are also vital collaborators who can partner with administrators and leaders to establish comprehensive school crisis response programs, protocols, and practices.

### Rationale
The basic assumption of crisis work underscores that the crisis state is, "...a temporary state of upset and disorganization, characterized chiefly by an individual's inability to cope with a particular situation using customary methods of problem solving, and by the potential for a radically positive or negative outcome" (Slaikeua, 1990, p. 15). As such, crisis work is brief in nature, often lasting only one or two sessions or until the immediate crisis has passed. Goals are generally limited to resolving the crisis and restoring a pre-crisis level of functioning while linking students to specific school or community-based interventions and supports if limitations in functioning persist.

A crisis is a sudden, traumatizing life event that is perceived as extremely negative, generates feelings of helplessness, powerlessness, and/or entrapment, and may occur suddenly, unexpectedly, and without warning (NASP, 2016). Crisis events could include acts of war and/or terrorism, violent and/or unexcected death, threatened death and/or injury, human-caused disasters, natural disasters, and severe (nonfatal) illness or injury that that overwhelms usual coping mechanisms (NASP, 2016). While understanding the various types of crisis events are important, the crisis event itself should not drive if or when the school crisis response interventions are employed. Instead, school social workers should rely on screening and assessment information to determine the level of crisis impact to drive interventions and match students to support via Universal/Tier 1, Targeted/Tier 2, or Intensive/Tier 3 as appropriate.

*Key Elements of Successful Programs*

Comprehensive crisis interventions in schools will ensure that school- and district-level decisions have been made in the following nine areas (UCLA, 2016):

1. Scope of events. Decisions and mapping in the crisis response system that included procedures for any of the following:
   a. Crises that affect smaller segments of the student body
   b. Crises experienced by individual students (e.g., drug overdose, suicide attempt)
   c. Community events that produce strong reactions among students at school
   d. Planning responses (e.g. psychological support) for helping (treating/referring) traumatized students (staff?) in the days and weeks following an event
   e. Preventive procedures
2. Crisis criteria. When should an event be seen as requiring a crisis response?
3. Who needs aftermath help?
4. Types of responses
   a. Communication
   b. Direction and coordination
   c. Health and safety
1. Providing for language and cultural differences
2. Which school staff respond to crises?
3. Other district and community resources
4. Crisis debriefing
5. Inservice training

Preparation and planning for the physical and psychological safety in advance of a school crisis can improve our ability to affirm the safety of our students and appropriately triage and respond to our students social/emotional/behavioral needs. When specifically considering the crisis counseling and support school social workers will provide for Targeted/Tier 2 groups of students or Intensive/Tier 3 individual supports, school social workers approach the work understanding that the crisis state is not permanent and that restoration to equilibrium and previous levels of functioning are expected outcomes following intervention. Utilizing strengths and focusing on solutions to foster resilience, school social workers initiate the short-term nature work of crisis work by limiting goals to support the student(s) in resolving the crisis situation and might be more direct with the student than under other circumstances (Gilliland & James, 2017).

The overarching goal of crisis intervention and support within MTSS structures for school social workers is to reaffirm the health and safety for students and the school community. Physical and psychological safety can be addressed within the overarching goal that the student and school are safe from injury and further harm following these phases of school social work intervention and support (NASP, 2016):

1. Recognize the importance of adult reactions and behaviors
2. Minimize crisis exposure
3. Reuniting/locating caregivers and significant others
4. Providing facts and adaptive interpretations
5. Returning students to a safe school environment
6. Providing opportunities to take actions

Following these phases of support, the school social worker supports efforts for the student to become as objective as possible in examining their experience and perceptions of the crisis situation, to identify their emotional responses, and to find and utilize their preferred coping mechanisms. School social workers will help build coping mechanisms when necessary and will also support the student to explore ways to resolve the crisis. While recovery is the norm, understandably not all individuals will be affected equally by the crisis and student outcomes following crisis intervention and support will vary. Therefore, school social workers progress monitoring students' response to crisis intervention and support may result in linking the student to additional school- or community-based resources and support.

Crisis intervention is strengths-oriented and the school social worker identifies typical coping strategies that the student can draw on to help resolve the crisis. While the primary goal is to restore the student to his or her level of functioning before the crisis, it may also be possible to help the student gain some insight into factors that may have contributed to the development of the crisis (Gilliland & James, 2017).

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Minnesota Department of Education (MDE): Responding to a Trauma and Tragedy

Homeland Security and Emergency Management, A Division of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety: Minnesota School Safety Center

Office for Victims of Crime (OVC): School Crisis Response Initiative

National Association of School Psychologist (NASP): Prevent, Reaffirm, Evaluate, Provide and Respond, Examine (PREPaRE)

National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement: National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement

National Child Traumatic Stress Network: Psychological First Aid (PFA)

National Child Traumatic Stress Network: Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR)

National Education Association (NEA): School Crisis Guide

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools: Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center

School Social Work Association of America: Crisis Response in Schools

School Social Work Association of America: Crisis Response & Intervention: Responding to Tragedy

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis, Best Practice Toolkit

Helping Kids Grieve: https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/grief/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_term=griefchild&utm_content=ChildGrief&utm_campaign=SSIC2018

Helping Kids Grieve: Coalition to Support Grieving Students: Home Page

Roberts' Seven Stage Crisis Intervention Model: [PDF] The Seven-Stage Crisis Intervention Model: A Road Map to Goal Attainment, Problem Solving, and Crisis Resolution

Crisis Prevention Institute: Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI Training) | CPI

NASW School Safety Resources: https://www.socialworkers.org/practice/school-social-work/school-social-work-tools/school-safety-resources

**Individual Counseling**

*Introduction*

Social work with students is based on an ecological model in which students are viewed within the context of classroom, school, family and peers. Therefore, it is quite rare for social work intervention to address the student only, as (Constable & Walberg, 2006) note it

> ...would be ineffective to work with the child without working with the teacher who can influence the school environment, and the parents who can influence the home environment. It is important to begin with environmental changes, for.. ...these can have the most rapid results. When changes in the child's real environments take place, the social worker can assist the child to change correspondingly (p. 464).

Individual work with students in a school setting, then, is only a part of the process of helping students change and will generally be accompanied by support and consultation provided to the teacher and family as well.

### Rationale

All social work practice follows a pattern of engagement, assessment, goal setting, determining appropriate interventions to accomplish the goals, monitoring the effectiveness of the intervention and termination.  When school social workers provide counseling to individual students, they must do so within this context.

### Determining When to Use This Intervention

A careful assessment of student needs and the identification of goals precedes any ongoing work with the student. Sometimes, a complete assessment of a student is provided by IEP teams, physicians or therapists from other agencies, or by a social worker who has worked with the student in other settings. In these situations, the school social worker should become familiar with the recommendations of others, as well as assess student needs within the context of the school setting. In other situations, the school social worker might be a member of a school-based team conducting an assessment on the student. This thorough assessment leads to the development of goals and objectives that the worker and student would work on together. Treatment goals should be related to problems that occur in the school setting or that interfere with a student's ability to learn. School social workers are charged with determining educational needs and the services necessary to meet those needs, using IDEA categories. Sometimes, however, diagnoses are available to the social worker as an additional aid in developing appropriate intervention strategies.

### Key Elements of Successful Programs

Once goals and objectives have been determined, interventions are selected to help the student accomplish his or her individually determined goals. When it is determined that a student can benefit from individual counseling, the school social worker would meet individually with the student according to a schedule determined to meet the goals. Interventions should reflect standard practices for treating the student's problems.  In other words, school social workers should use evidence-based practices, those interventions that have been carefully researched and found to be effective, whenever possible to help resolve student problems.

Ongoing monitoring of progress towards goals involves tracking markers of success. These markers may be counts of inappropriate behaviors to be changed (such as classroom outbursts or school detentions), the reduction of symptoms of mental illness (such as symptoms of obsessive-compulsive disorder or bipolar disorder), grades, school attendance, or rapid assessment instruments that can identify difficulties in the student's life (such as self-esteem and attitudes

towards others). The school social worker should keep records of sessions with individual students that include records of contacts, services provided and documentation of progress. Records should not contain unnecessary information that is not relevant or might be misinterpreted (Cuevas, 2006).

The termination process should ideally be based on attainment of goals identified in the assessment phase, but it is often determined by situational factors such as the student's move to a new school. In either event, termination should be a planned process in which the student and school social worker reflect on progress toward goals and plan strategies to maintain the growth that has occurred during the individual counseling.

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## Suicide Prevention

### Introduction
Comprehensive school social work practice in the area of suicide prevention seeks to ensure student safety by promoting and providing services within a multi-tiered system (MTSS) of support that includes universal prevention, screening, and targeted or intensive interventions in response to student risk assessments. While school social work expertise is often sought for screening students for depression or assessing students' risk of suicide, school social workers are also vital collaborators who can build out comprehensive school programs and practices to prevent suicide.

### Rationale
According to the National Center for Health Statistics and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suicide is the second leading cause of death among older adolescents, ages 15-24

(2017). Approximately 17% of high school students have seriously considered attempting suicide (Child Trends, 2017). The risk is greatest for students who suffer from depression. Students who are LGBTQ+ contemplate suicide at almost three times the rate of heterosexual youth. Furthermore, Students who are LGBTQ+ almost five times as likely to have attempted suicide and LGBTQ+ youth suicide attempts were almost five times as likely to require medical treatment than heterosexual youth.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*
Comprehensive school social work practice for suicide prevention incorporates the practices of prevention, crisis response, and postvention within the MTSS framework. Utilizing a needs assessment with local data (i.e. student engagement and crisis trends, Minnesota Student Survey Data, etc.) can be an effective first step in determining the need for implementation of Universal/Tier 1 suicide prevention programs or practices and the effectiveness of the Universal/Tier 1 prevention strategy once in place. Intimately tied to ongoing progress monitoring of Universal/Tier 1 prevention programs and practices, universal screening can also serve as a component of data-based decision-making when responding to individual student safety concerns. Finally, it is critically important that the school social worker is knowledgable and incorporates appropriate postvention practices in instances that the school community is impacted by a student death by suicide.

### *Key Elements of Successful Programs*
Risk assessment is a critical component of ensuring individual student safety and safety in the school population in response to self-injurious behavior, suicide ideation, and suicide attempt. Components of effective risk assessment will include universal screening data, a clinical interview, collateral reports, and other standardized measures to ensure the student is matched to the appropriate school- or community-based intervention support as needed (Raines & Ochocki, 2019).

School social workers are often asked to complete a risk assessment when students are thought to be at risk of suicide. General warning signs of sucide include depression, a recent or sudden loss, personality changes, bullying, a lack of social support,  verbal or written suicide threats, expressions of hopelessness, lack of interest in the future, giving away prized possessions, previous suicide attempts, the presence of a weapon, alcohol or substance abuse and sleep disturbances have been found to be risk factors associated with suicide attempts (Kaslow, 2014). However, when specifically considering youth, warning signs for this segment of the population include the following (SAVE, 2018):
1. Talking about or making plans for suicide
2. Expressing hopelessness about the future
3. Displaying severe/overwhelming emotional pain or distress
4. Showing worrisome behavioral cues or marked changes in behavior, particularly in the presence of the warning signs above. Specifically, this includes significant:
a. Withdrawal from or changing in social connections/situation..
b. Changes in sleep (increased or decreased).
c. Anger or hostility that seems out of character or out of context.
d. Recent increased agitation or irritability.

When conducting the risk assessment, the school social worker's clinical interview should include asking the student directly if he or she is considering suicide, determining if the student has developed a plan to carry out the suicide, assessing the degree to which the student has set the plan in motion and considers the lethality of the plan. Considering the self-regulation and other

developmental factors of youth, it is best to err on the side of caution with such students and if there appears to be genuine risk of self- harm, the risk of self-harm overrides confidentiality. The school social worker should work collaboratively with a multi-disciplinary team with knowledge of the student to assess risk and contact the student's parent or guardian to assist the family in obtaining an emergency psychiatric evaluation when necessary.

Importantly, a suicidal student should not be left alone. If when conducting a risk assessment a school social worker must leave the student to make arrangements for an emergency evaluation or to contact parents, another school staff should stay with the student (Sheafor & Horesji, 2006). Following a referral for community-based psychiatric evaluation, the school social worker should check back with the student and family to be certain that the immediate danger of self-harm has passed, to ensure safety planning and supports are in place in the school-setting, and that plans to support the student are communicated with the multidisciplinary team as is educationally appropriate.

When the school community is impacted by a student's death by suicide, careful attention and implemention of postvention practices help support the individual and group (i.e. students, staff, etc.) grief associated with the loss, reduce the negative impact caused by exposure to suicide, and help prevent further suicide for high risk students is imperative (Raines & Ochocki, 2019). A comprehensive toolkit to support educators and schools in postvention practices has been created in collaboration by the Suicide Prevention Resource Center, Education Development Center, and American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Society and is included in the resources section.

### *Future Trends*
A recent school-based suicide prevention strategy gaining traction is related to adding suicide prevention hotline numbers to issued student IDs in K-12 and higher education. This is now a mandate in a number of states, including neighboring Wisconsin. The Wisconsin bill instructs that institutions "shall include on each identification card issued to a student the telephone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline or one of its affiliate crisis centers or, if the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline ceases operations, another national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to individuals in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day and 7 days a week." While this is not a law in Minnesota, school social workers could advocate for this prevention strategy to be put into practice with their local education agency (LEA).

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## Websites

Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention: Framework

Beck Depression Inventory: https://www.ismanet.org/doctoryourspirit/pdfs/Beck-Depression-Inventory-BDI.pdf

Children's Depression Inventory: CDI 2 Children's Depression Inventory 2

Minesota Department of Education: Preventing Suicide in Schools

Minnesota Department of Health: Suicide Prevention Plan

Minnesota Department of Health: Suicide Prevention for Schools

MSSWA Suicide Prevention Train the Trainer: MSSWA Suicide Awareness & Prevention

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Screening Tool: https://www.nimh.nih.gov/research/research-conducted-at-nimh/asq-toolkit-materials/asq-tool/screening-tool_155867.pdf

Patient Health Questionnaire-9: https://www.mdcalc.com/phq-9-patient-health-questionnaire-9

Suicide Awareness Voices of Education: SAVE: Suicide Prevention, Information, and Awareness

Suicide Prevention Resource Center: <u>Preventing Suicide Toolkit for High Schools</u>

Suicide Prevention Resource Center: <u>After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools 2nd Edition</u>

The Suicide Behaviors Questionnaire-Revised {SBQ-R):
<u>https://www.aetnabetterhealth.com/louisiana/assets/pdf/providers/communications/SDQ-Color.pdf</u>

Yellow Ribbon International Suicide Prevention Program: <u>Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program : Home</u>

Wisconsin Assembly Bill: <u>531</u>

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**Group Services**

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## Classroom Presentations

### *Introduction*
Classroom presentations are a method in which a school social worker conducts social emotional learning sessions with an entire classroom of students. A classroom teacher may request the expertise of a school social worker for intervention with an entire class around social emotional issues of concern such as bullying or grief and loss.  While this is not a primarily academic intervention, it assists the class in addressing the social emotional issues that interfere with academic achievement.

### *Rationale*
School social workers have specialized group work skills that prepare them to provide classroom presentations. Topics included in the scope of practice for a school social worker may include social emotional development, character education, bullying and racial or sexual harassment. Research shows that if a school addresses the social emotional needs of students, both classroom climates and academic outcomes are improved. Oftentimes, classroom lessons around social emotional topics will help build classroom community and teach prosocial behaviors to students. If a student experiences this sense of community and is attached to school, he or she may do better academically and will be less likely to drop out of school.

A classroom presentation is an excellent way for the school social worker and classroom teacher to engage in collaboration and model cooperation, sharing and problem-solving for students. Classroom presentations are a proactive way for the entire class to benefit from the services of a school social worker.  If a school social worker engages in classroom presentations, he or she becomes more visible to students which may increase the likelihood that students may self-refer in times of need.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*

A classroom presentation is an effective method to utilize when an issue that affects the entire class becomes apparent. It is appropriate to offer a classroom presentation when the teacher is open to teaming with the social worker in order to implement creative ways of addressing the issue. At times of a school crisis, a classroom presentation that shares pertinent information is often an effective way to decrease stress and rumors related to the event. Classroom presentations are also a high-quality way to present racial or sexual harassment policy to students.

### Key Elements of Successful Programs
Teaming between the school social worker and the classroom teacher is essential when utilizing classroom presentations. School social workers may prepare a classroom presentation, but it will be more effective when it is delivered by both professionals. Oftentimes, the classroom teacher has a strong relationship with the students and possesses the ability to carry on with the lesson throughout the school day. In order for the school social workers presentation to be more effective, the classroom teacher should utilize methods to reinforce the lesson throughout the school day.
In order to provide quality classroom presentations, school social workers must possess knowledge and familiarity with the program they are using and develop a level of expertise in the area. Social workers should assess the reason they have been asked to become involved and be aware of expectations of the teacher or administrator for outcomes of their presentations. An effective school social worker will review pertinent research and discover best practice methods to address the issue.

When providing a classroom presentation, it is of utmost importance to ensure the material is presented with consideration of the audience. The school social worker will make certain that material is presented at the correct developmental stages of the students.

## Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence: RULER — Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence

Second Step: Second Step Program | Second Step

CASEL list of Classroom SEL programs: https://casel.org/in-the-classroom/

## Websites

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning: www.casel.org

## Group Counseling

### Introduction
Group work is frequently utilized by school social workers as an effective way to build rapport with students, provide social skills instruction and offer support for students. Problems such as lack of peer relationships, substance abuse, grief and loss, trauma or mental health issues may be addressed through the facilitation of student groups. Group membership may end the isolation and lack of understanding that many students experience because they begin to interact with students with similar issues.

### Rationale

Groups are an effective way to assist isolated students in developing relationships with other students and allowing students to benefit from the support of peers.  Facilitating social skills or therapeutic groups is both an efficient and cost-effective way for the school social worker to work with students in need.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*

School social workers may provide a support group that is specific to a certain topic. Examples of specific topics often addressed in a support group include anger management, friendship, grief and loss, chemical dependency and family change.  Often, student groups will focus on more general social skills. The school social worker will engage in direct teaching of social skills, providing students with an opportunity to practice skills and discuss strategies they may attempt to use in a variety of social situations. When facilitating a group, the school social worker will need to decide if the group will be an ongoing, open-ended group or a time-limited group.

### *Key Elements of Successful Programs*

In order to successfully facilitate a therapeutic group, the school social worker must have a thorough understanding of the group process and group stages. The facilitator should make efforts to select group members that will be compatible. Group ground rules for the functioning of the group should be discussed and agreed upon by all members of a group during the initial meetings. The school social worker should ensure that all members of the group understand its purpose and why they were chosen as a participant.  Confidentiality must be discussed, understood and agreed upon by all members.  If the group is designed to improve a specific skill, efforts should be made to assist the student to generalize skills learned to use in the larger school environment. One way to do this is to inform the classroom teacher of the group's purpose, within the limits of confidentiality.  If school staff is aware of a group's purpose, they may be able to reinforce group lessons throughout the school day in the larger school environment. Informing the classroom teacher of the purpose and why the student is involved in the group is an effective way to solicit their support in excusing the student from class for group sessions.

## References

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## Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

McGinnis, E. (2011). *Skillstreaming the adolescent: A guide for teaching prosocial skills* (3rd ed.). Research Press. ISBN-13: 978-0878226535

McGinnis, E. (2011). *Skillstreaming the elementary school child: A guide for teaching prosocial skills.* (3rd ed.). Research Press. ISBN-13: 978-0878226559

Social Skills Training School Survival Group Life Skills Training: https://www.naspcenter.org/factsheets/socialskills_fs.html

**Websites**

Life Skills Training: www.lifeskillstraining.com

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**School Wide Services**

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## In-Service Training

### *Introduction*

According to Standard 10 of the NASW Standards for School Social Work Services, school social workers shall develop and provide training and educational programs that address the goals and mission of the educational institution. Training and educational programs may include various activities, such as school social workers providing learning experiences for school district staff, parents, community members, or social work colleagues.

### *Rationale*

School social workers have knowledge and expertise in identifying and addressing the barriers to learning. School social workers may utilize this expertise by sharing knowledge with the broader school community. If educators understand barriers to learning better, they are empowered to work collaboratively with school social workers to address student needs and foster academic progress. School social workers should explore opportunities to share their successful practices and methods utilized with school social work colleagues. Professional conferences and workshops targeting school social workers are a forum for this opportunity.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*

This intervention may be appropriate to utilize when the school social worker has expertise that can be shared with other licensed staff to meet a licensure renewal requirement. For example, in Minnesota staff licensed by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) is required to have clock hours in Understanding Warning Signs of Mental Health Disorders, Positive Behavioral Interventions, and Suicide Prevention. School social workers possess knowledge and expertise in these areas and are able to share this information with other school staff.

Staff development, led by the school social worker, may be a way to share information relevant to a building-wide need that has been identified by the administrator, building staff or students. MSSWA has developed a Suicide Awareness and Prevention training that can be utlized for professional development and meets MDE's expectations (see Professional Educator Licensing and Standards) related to professional development. Other examples include, an in-service introducing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports may facilitate a school's effort to address behavioral concerns in an effective way. School social workers possess knowledge about mandated reporting and county social services. Since all school staff are considered mandated reporters, it is pertinent that all receive accurate information about how and when to make a report of suspected abuse or neglect. School social workers are well poised to provide this information to staff school-wide.

### *Key Elements of Successful Programs*

When providing in-service training to school staff, it is important that school social workers present information that will help educators develop a more in-depth understanding of the barriers to learning. Examples of barriers include children's mental health disorders, poverty, abuse or other traumatic life events. This type of in-service training is able to provide educators with examples of interventions or methods of communicating with parents and students so the effect of the barriers is diminished. Whether providing training for parents, educators, or social work colleagues, it is vitally important the school social workers attempt to foster a sense of trust, respect and collaboration. When a building administrator actively supports and endorses the information shared by the school social worker, the training program will be more meaningful and utilized by others.

## References

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NASW Standard for School Social Work Services. (n.d.). https://www.socialworkers.org/Practice/Practice-Standards-Guidelines

Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). (2019). *Renew my license.* Retrieved from https://mn.gov/pelsb/current-educators/renew/

## Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

MSSWA Early Warning Signs of Mental Health Disorders: Online Training

MSSWA Suicide Prevention Train the Trainer: MSSWA Suicide Awareness & Prevention

National Association of Social Workers (NASW): Standards of Practice for School Social Work Services Booklet

Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB): Professional Educator Licensing and StandardsPBIS: PBIS.org | Home

## Websites

Minnesota School Social Workers' Association: www.msswa.org

Council for Exceptional Children: www.cec.sped.org

School Social Work Association of America: www.sswaa.org

National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports: www.pbis.org

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning: www.casel.org

**Bullying Prevention**

*Introduction*

Most students experience an incident of bullying in school at least once. In 2017, 20% of students aged 12-18 reported being bullied during the school year (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2019). School social workers intervene with the bully by providing social skills education, provide support to the victims of bullying and assist schools in implementing school-wide and community anti-bullying interventions. In April 2014, the Minnesota Legislature passed the Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act to strengthen bullying prevention and intervention efforts in Minnesota schools. Read the full statute on the Office of the Revisor website.

*Rationale*

Bullying is a prevalent form of youth violence, particularly in school settings. In today's schools, school social workers and most educators are aware of how bullying affects the social and emotional health of students, the students' ability to focus on academic achievement, and the students' desire to attend school. As bullying in schools typically takes place in unstructured settings such as the cafeteria, hallways, and playground during recess, it is paramount that the school social worker assist in training all school personnel in recognizing and mitigating bullying.

*Determining When to Use This Intervention*

Often a specific incident that affects an entire classroom or an entire school will motivate school staff to investigate bullying interventions.  Sometimes unhappy student victims and/or their unhappy parents will ask for help. Teachers and/or principas who observe growing behavior referrals for bullying may choose to initiate anti-bullying interventions.

According to Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act (2014), bullying is characterized by Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and: There is an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in prohibited conduct and the target of the behavior and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

*Key Elements of Successful Programs*

Successful anti-bullying programs have the following key elements:

• School-wide program implementation
• Prevention interventions with all students
• Identification of ways to express emotions healthfully
• Education on replacement behaviors to bullying
• Work with victims of bullying
• Family and community involvement
• Building staff acceptance and "buy in" of the program
• Awareness that change in behavior will take time and persistence

Helpful tools and examples of anti-bullying interventions can be found in Chapter 42, Bullying, *The school services sourcebook: a guide for school-based professionals*, 2006.

## References

Howe, E., Marini, J. W., Haymes, E., & Tenor, T. (2013). Bullying: Best practices for prevention and intervention in schools. In C. Franklin, M. B.. Harris, & P. Allen Meares (Eds.), *The school services sourcebook: A guide for school-based professionals* (2nd ed.) (pp. 473-480). Oxford University Press.

Minnesota Department of Education. (2014). *Safe and Supportive Schools Act.* https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/safe/act/058978

Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). (2019). *Renew my license.* https://mn.gov/pelsb/current-educators/renew/

National Center for Educational Statistics. (2019). Student reports of bullying: Results from the 2017 School Crime Supplement to the National Victimization Survey. *U.S. Department of Education. http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2015056* .

Smith, P. K., Ananiadou, K., & Cowie, H. (2003). Interventions to reduce school bullying. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 48, 591-599.

## Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

A Manual for Schools and Communities: ERIC - ED453592 - Preventing Bullying: A Manual for Schools and Communities., 1998

CASEL- Social and Emotional Learning Bullying Prevention: https://www.casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/3_SEL_and_Bullying_Prevention_2009.pdf

The No-Blame Approach: http://socialna-akademija.si/joiningforces/category/joining-forces-to-combat-cyberbullying-in-schools/chapter-7/

Method of Shared Concern: https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/bullystoppers/krsharedconcern.pdf

Owleus Bullying Prevention Program: https://olweus.sites.clemson.edu/
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Bullying Interventions: https://www.pbis.org/topics/bullying-prevention

Restorative Practices and Bullying Prevention: https://www.stopbullying.gov/blog/2016/03/02/restorative-justice-practices-and-bullying-prevention

## Websites

Minnesota Department of Education: Bullying Prevention and Help

PACER: National Bullying Prevention Center - Resources
Stopbullying.gov

ERIC Virtual Library on Bullying in School: https://eric.ed.gov/?q=Bullying

Dr. Rigby's Bullying Pages: National Centre Against Bullying

Olweus Bullying Prevention: Bullying

Minnesota Department of Education: MDE: Safe and Supportive Schools Act

## Conflict Resolution

### Introduction

The Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center states that conflict resolution is about teaching people new ways to work through and resolve disputes that do not involve violence. In the school setting and in our communities, school social workers teach children the 'life skill' that conflicts and disagreements are a normal, natural part of life, but that they can learn ways to handle these conflicts in non-violent and respectful ways.

### Rationale

Although conflict is a normal and natural part of life, there are healthy or unhealthy ways to handle it. In some situations, children experience bullying and teasing and pointless confrontations that can result in the victims' lack of self-esteem, academic performance, and refusal or fear in coming to school. According to CDC's nationwide Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) (2017):

- Nearly 9% of high school students had been in a physical fight on school property one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.
- About 6% of students had been threatened or injured with a weapon (for example, a gun, knife, or club) on school property one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.
- About 7% of students had not gone to school at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.

Therefore, children need to be taught in a comprehensive program that teaches everyone the skills to respond to conflict in a constructive manner. By providing children with the knowledge and skills that they need to resolve conflict peacefully, school social workers can help create safer environments and reduce the numbers of suspensions, expulsions, disciplinary referrals, classroom disruptions and playground fights (School-Based Conflict Resolution Programs – A California Resource Guide).

### Determining When to Use This Intervention

Since conflict is a universal issue, is it optimal that all students have an opportunity to learn the skills and knowledge on how to resolve issues peacefully. The Minnesota Student Survey helps schools see the extent of their bullying or conflict issues as well.

***Key Elements of Successful Programs***

A review of the national research reveals the following characteristics that help to make a school-based conflict resolution program successful:

A comprehensive approach, involving curriculum, peer mediation, and parent involvement components

- Introduction in early grades and implementation through grade 12
- Long-term commitment to maintaining the program
- Strong leadership and disciplinary policies
- Ongoing training and staff development, including teachers, administrators, community representatives, and other school staff and parents/families
- A culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate approach
- Ongoing monitoring, evaluation and improvement
  (School-Based Conflict Resolution Programs – a California Resource Guide)

According to Crawford and Bodine (1996), some of the specific skills taught in most conflict resolution programs include these steps:

- Setting ground rules – agreeing to work together and set rules such as no name-calling, blaming or yelling
- Listening – let each person describe his/her point of view without interruption. The point is to understand what a person wants and why they want it
- Finding common interests – establish facts that both can agree on and determine what is important to each person
- Brainstorming possible solutions to the problem – list options without judging or feeling they must be carried out, and try to think of solutions where everyone gains something.
- Discussing each person's point of view of the proposed solution – negotiate to reach a compromise that is acceptable to everyone involved
- Reaching an agreement – each person should state his or her interpretation of the agreement and write it down, checking back later to see if it is working

## References

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2004). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance – United States, 2003. MMWR Surveillance Summaries 2004.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2017). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 2017. YRBSS | Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System | Data | Adolescent and School Health

Minnesota Department of Education. (n.d.). *Minnesota student survey.*
https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/health/mss/index.htm

Crawford, D., & Bodine R. (1996). Conflict resolution: a guide to implementing programs in schools, youth-serving organizations, and community and juvenile justice,  NCJ 160935

## Websites

Center for Disease Control: Youth Violence |Violence Prevention|Injury Center

Youth.gov: Violence Prevention

SAMHSA: Efforts to Address Youth Violence

National Center for Healthy Safe Children: https://healthysafechildren.org//

## Discipline Policies

### Introduction

Effective school discipline policies and practices are critical to promoting students' successful learning and well-being. School discipline is a collaborative effort by the parents, administration, students, and teachers in order to ensure a safe school climate for all. Discipline policies and practices strengthen students' behavioral skills by addressing the causes of their problem behaviors while preserving the integrity of the learning environment, ensuring the safety and dignity of all students and staff, and fostering progress toward long-term learning and behavioral goals. School social workers assist in these school policies by providing assistance to students and school personnel to identify underlying factors in student behavior. School social workers also help to intervene effectively with students and their families to provide services on-site or make appropriate referrals outside of school to assist with the identified problem. School social workers also provide a critical lens in critiquing student discipline policies to ensure that policies are grounded in trauma awareness, equity, and maintain a culture conducive to student growth.

### Rationale

Schools recognize that all students are entitled to learn and develop in a setting which promotes respect of self, others and property. When student conduct interferes with this process, school discipline policies are meant to consistently respond to problem behaviors.

### Determining When to Use This Intervention

Student discipline policies are in place in all schools and are referred to in cases where student conduct interferes with their learning or the learning of others. Examples of unacceptable behavior are: violations against school property or the property of others; use
of profane language; gambling; hazing; attendance problems; violent opposition to authority; use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs or the distribution of these; possessing weapons, ammunition, or explosives of any kind; possession of pornographic materials; sexual abuse or harassment; falsification of records; and, verbal or physical assaults on others.

### Key Elements of a Successful Program

A student discipline policy needs to be created in accordance with applicable laws/statutes. There are many barriers to effective school discipline, however, including the widespread use of punitive approaches and inconsistent policies and practices that students view as unfair and that often disproportionately impact minorities and students with disabilities. Research illustrates that getting suspended or expelled increases students' risk for falling into unproductive behavior, affecting their social-emotional development, academic performance, and life trajectories. Successful school discipline policies are clear and equitably applied to all students; employ culturally competent practices, demonstrate an awareness of student trauma and avoid retraumatization, safeguard the well-being of all students and staff, keep students in school and out of the juvenile justice system,

and incorporate family involvement. Successful school discipline policies are grounded in a multi-tiered system that clearly communicates norms, expectations, rules and appropriate consequences, and applies them equitably for all students. Within policies, the school board, superintendent, principal, school staff, parents, and the students themselves have areas of responsibility. Some of these include:

- School Board – holds all personnel responsible for the maintenance of order
- Superintendent – establishes guidelines and directives to carry out this policy and communicates with the school board
- Principal – is responsible to formulate building rules necessary to enforce this policy. The principal involves other professionals in the disposition of behavior referrals
- School social workers – can help in establishing school-wide violence prevention programs and also work with students and families as situations arise where their expertise can be applied
- Parents/Guardians – are held responsible for the behavior of their children as determined by law and community practices
- All school personnel – contribute to the atmosphere of mutual respect

Positive approaches to discipline teach students new skills and reinforce prosocial behaviors. School social workers support the education of prosocial behaviors at a universal level by supporting strong social emotional learning activities. School discipline policies should focus on fair and consistent discipline. Modalities of positive discipline policies include: positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS); social and emotional development (SEL Implementation Guidance); restorative practices to engage in dialogue, resolve conflict, and teach alternatives to violence and aggression (MDE Restorative Practices); and positive school climate (MDE School Climate). These approaches operate within a multitiered system of support framework that encompasses universal prevention and skills building, early identification and intervention, and targeted supports for learning and behavioral concerns.

## References

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Los Angeles Unified School District. (2014). *Discipline foundation policy.* https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/11925#:~:text=The%20Discipline%20Foundation%20Policy%20establishes,behavior%20interventions%20at%20all%20schools.&text=Traditional%20models%20of%20school%20discipline,often%20resulting%20in%20punitive%20consequences.

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National Association of School Psychologists. *Research summary: Effective school discipline policies and practices: Supporting student learning*.

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The National Juvenile Justice Network. (2011). *Safe and effective school disciplinary policies and practices: A policy platform*. http://www.njjn.org/our-work/juvenile-justice-reform-safe-and-effective-school-disciplinary-policies-and-practices

St. Cloud Area School District. (2020). *Student code of conduct*. https://www.isd742.org/cms/lib/MN01909691/Centricity/Domain/604/Rights_and_Responsibilities.pdf

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports: PBIS

Minnesota Department of Education Social and Emotional Development: SEL Implementation Guidance)

Restorative Justice: MDE Restorative Practices)

Minnesota Department of Education positive school climate: (MDE School Climate).

### Legal References

Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)

Minn. Stat. Ch. 125A (Special Education and Special Programs)

Minn. Stat. 121A.40 to 121A.575 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)

## Dropout Prevention

### Introduction
Keeping students in school through graduation is a major goal of public schools. When students begin to have attendance problems, schools often implement multilevel strategies that meet students' needs and prevent them from dropping out. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE) (2011), an estimated 1.3 million American high school students drop out every year; a disproportionate number of whom are youth of color.

### Rationale
Education remains the major tool by which people become empowered. The mission for every school should be to educate students to equip them to become "knowledgeable, responsible, socially skilled, healthy, caring, and contributing citizens" (Greenberg et al., 2003). Consequences for a community when students attend irregularly or drop school completely include: having a diminished pool of qualified people from diverse backgrounds, a workforce that lacks the basic knowledge and job skills needed to fully participate in the labor market and contribute to the economy. This can

result in increased costs of social services and higher rates of crime and poverty (Kim and Streeter, 2006). Developing and maintaining a robust school dropout prevention plan mitigates the great loss of human potential in terms of students' cognitive, social, and emotional growth, and their ability to successfully navigate the world.

## *Determining When to Use This Intervention*
Interventions to reduce truancy, mitigate school refusal, and/or alternative education programs would be implemented when a student fails to attend school on a regular basis, and/or if alternative educational programming would result in higher levels of student attendance and school success.

## *Key Elements of a Successful Program*
For those students who begin to show attendance problems, a multi-tiered approach is most successful, that is, working as a team with administrators, teachers, school social workers, school nurses, families and students.

School strategies:
• Improve teacher-student relationships
• Maintain a positive school-wide culture
• Provide culturally relevant education
• Engage student as active member of school community
• Social skills and self-esteem building strategies
• Provision of mental health services or coordinated in community as needed
• Use of alternative education methods
• Instructional technologies
• Violence prevention/conflict resolution

Family strategies:
• Good collaboration and communication between home and school
• Home visits to gain a more ecological view
• Holding workshops for parents for support and sharing strategies

Individual student strategies:
• Proper assessment of needs
• Collaborate to identify goals
• Consider work release programs (if applicable)
• Increase student's self-esteem, social skills and self-confidence
• Proper therapy if mental health issue is involved
• Proper academic interventions if this is found to be a problem
• Work and school collaboration to meet individual needs
• Use of mentors
• Service learning
• Consider alternative school programming

An alternative school is defined by the U.S. Dept. of Education (2002, p. 55) as "a public elementary/secondary school that addresses needs of students that typically cannot be met in a regular school and provides nontraditional education, serves as an adjunct to regular school, or falls outside the categories of regular, special education, or vocational education." These schools usually offer more flexible schedules, smaller teacher to student ratios, a modified curriculum and are based

on the belief that all children do not learn in the same way.  Success lies in an innovative curriculum and teachers with supportive attitudes (Reimer & Cash, 2003).

Best practices and characteristics of a successful alternative education program include:
• 	Low ratio of students to teacher
• 	A clear mission with rules enforced consistently and fairly
• 	A caring faculty who have high expectations for success
• 	A focus on individual learning styles and needs with emphasis on real-life learning
• 	Holistic services to meet needs of the whole child
• 	Student voices in decision-making (School Services Sourcebook, 2006).

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## Websites

American Psychological Association: Facing the School Dropout Dilemma

Minnesota Department of Education: Dropout Prevention/At-Risk Students

The National Education Association: Making High School Graduation a Priority

The National Dropout Prevention Center: Effective Strategies

School Dropout Prevention Program: High School Graduation Initiatives also know as the School Dropout Prevention Program

UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools: Dropout Prevention

What Works ClearingHouse: Dropout Prevention

## Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

### *Introduction*
The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015 reauthorized the half-century old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The new law continued to build on identified areas of progress, including language that allows for a broader definition of student success and encourages schools to establish learning environments that are essential for school readiness and academic success (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). To create successful learning environments, ESSA suggests local education agencies (LEAs) implement multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) while leaving states with flexibility in developing MTSS models that incorporate and respond to both academic and behavioral needs. Prior to the reauthorization of ESSA, the framework for successful academics was referred to as Response to Intervention and the framework for successful social/emotional/behavior was referred to as Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). MTSS is the framework that brings together these separate paradigms to help LEAs build the frameworks that necessarily recognize the interconnected functions of academic and behavioral success. The essential components of the MTSS framework include screening, a multi-level prevention system, progress monitoring and data-based decision making (Center on MTSS at AIR, 2020). The intent of these combined components is that the MTSS framework ensures well implemented academic and behavior instruction and intervention that systematically monitors and matches students to more intensive interventions and supports as needed (UCLA, 2006).

### *Rationale*
The MTSS framework has been found to effectively support educational efforts at improving student and school outcomes and in addressing instruction and interventions to respond to student and school learning needs (AIR, 2018). School social workers can play a key role in the essential components of MTSS by providing input on the MTSS framework structures and implementation practices in their school site. The School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA) endorses "utilizing the specialized skills of school social workers in designing, implementing and evaluat(ing) interventions to determine which students might benefit from additional assessment possibly leading to the provision of special education and related services" (SSWAA, 2006).

### *Determining how to Use This Intervention*
The question with MTSS isn't when, but rather how. Implementation challenges require states and LEAs look to and lean on implementation science to successful guide the building and sustaining of the MTSS framework (Center for MTSS at AIR, 2020):
Phase 1: Plan for success
- Conduct needs assessment
- Develop collaborative vision
- Define framework and select evidence-based practices
- Develop implementation and evaluation plan

Phase 2: Implement
- Training and coaching
- Infrastructure

- Evaluation

Phase 3: Sustain and expand
- Engage stakeholders
- Review lessons learned

## *Key Elements of Successful Programs*

As previously mentioned, the essential components of MTSS include screening, a multi-tiered prevention system, progress monitoring and data-based decision making (Center for MTSS at AIR, 2020:
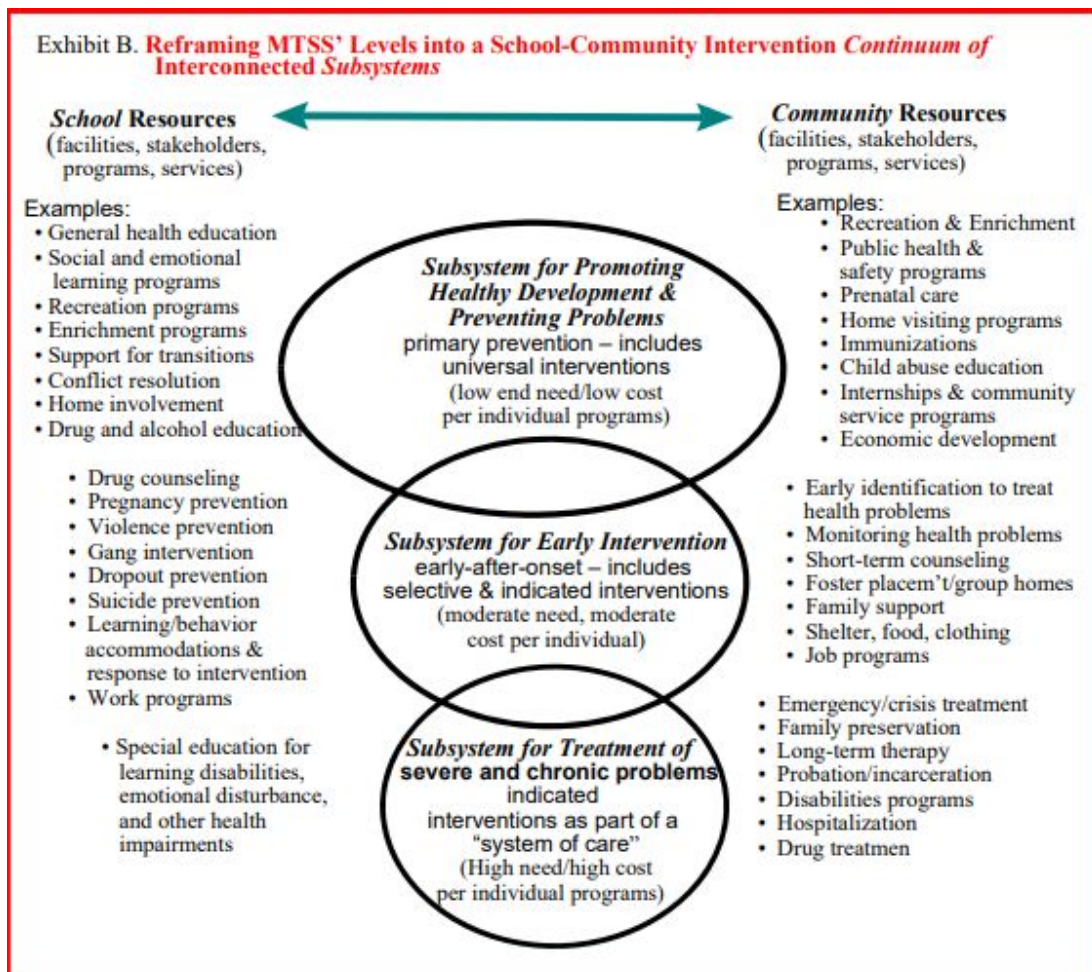
- Screening is generally conducted three times a year to identify students who may be at risk for
  poor outcomes and need additional academic, social, emotional, or behavioral support.
- Multi-level prevention system includes a continuum (Tiers 1, 2, and 3) of integrated academic,
  social, emotional, and behavioral instructional and intervention supports that are evidence-based and culturally and linguistically responsive.
- Progress monitoring uses valid and reliable tools and processes to assess performance, quantify improvement or responsiveness to intervention and instruction, and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, interventions, and supports.
- Data-based decision making includes data analysis and problem solving through teaming to make decisions about instruction, intervention, implementation, and disability identification (in accordance with state laws).

The UCLA Center for School Mental Health (2006) adds these considerations for successful implementation of MTSS:

- Ensure an optimal teaching environment, with personalized teaching - this includes motivation-
  oriented strategies to engage students in classroom instruction
- Use special assistance strategies stressing the least intervention needed to maintain a healthy
  classroom environment
- Develop "well-designed interventions" with the assistance of student support staff including school social workers
- Training for staff on how to implement successful interventions
- Allow enough time for implementation

Finally, the UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools (2016) urges states and LEAs think beyond the limitations of MTSS to reduce marginalization and fragmentation by systematically thinking and planning incorporate the instructional component, the learning supports component and the governance/management components of MTSS while also critically thinking about engagement with the larger community (see Exhibit B).

UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools (2006)

Exhibit B. **Reframing MTSS' Levels into a School-Community Intervention** *Continuum of Interconnected Subsystems*

**School Resources**
(facilities, stakeholders, programs, services)

Examples:
- General health education
- Social and emotional learning programs
- Recreation programs
- Enrichment programs
- Support for transitions
- Conflict resolution
- Home involvement
- Drug and alcohol education

- Drug counseling
- Pregnancy prevention
- Violence prevention
- Gang intervention
- Dropout prevention
- Suicide prevention
- Learning/behavior accommodations & response to intervention
- Work programs

- Special education for learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, and other health impairments

**Community Resources**
(facilities, stakeholders, programs, services)

Examples:
- Recreation & Enrichment
- Public health & safety programs
- Prenatal care
- Home visiting programs
- Immunizations
- Child abuse education
- Internships & community service programs
- Economic development

- Early identification to treat health problems
- Monitoring health problems
- Short-term counseling
- Foster placem't/group homes
- Family support
- Shelter, food, clothing
- Job programs

- Emergency/crisis treatment
- Family preservation
- Long-term therapy
- Probation/incarceration
- Disabilities programs
- Hospitalization
- Drug treatmen

**Subsystem for Promoting Healthy Development & Preventing Problems**
primary prevention – includes universal interventions
(low end need/low cost per individual programs)

**Subsystem for Early Intervention**
early-after-onset – includes selective & indicated interventions
(moderate need, moderate cost per individual)

**Subsystem for Treatment of severe and chronic problems**
indicated interventions as part of a "system of care"
(High need/high cost per individual programs)

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https://www.air.org/resource/essa-multi-tiered-systems-support-mtss-response-intervention-rti

Center on Multi-Tiered System of Support at the American Institutes of Research. (2020). *Essential components of MTSS.* https://mtss4success.org/essential-components

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UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools. (2016). *ESSA state consolidated plans: rethinking MTSS to better address barriers to learning*. http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essamtss.pdf

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U.S. Department of Education. (2017). Every student Succeeds Act. https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn

### Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

Minnesota Department of Education: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

National Center for Learning Disabilities: https://www.ncld.org/get-involved/understand-the-issues/multi-tier-system-of-supports-response-to-intervention/

### Websites

School Social Work Association of America: www.sswaa.org

UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools: www.smhp.psych.ucla.edu

Education Evolving: http://www.educationevolving.org/pdf/Response_to_Intervention.pdf

Intervention Central: http://www.interventioncentral.org/

National Center on Intensive Intervention: https://intensiveintervention.org/

National Center for Learning Disabilities: https://www.ncld.org/

## Peer Mediation

### Introduction
Peer mediation is a form of intervention in which peers mediate with each other to resolve a conflict. The mediation is driven by the students involved in the conflict, but monitored by an adult. School social workers are natural leaders in training students in peer mediation.

### Rationale
Peer mediation/conflict management is used as a way for peers to work through their own issues and conflicts in a respectful manner without an adult.  Peer mediation often works better than an adult-driven mediation because the students can listen to each other and understand where the conflict began. It also offers students a voice in the problem, in their own words.  The mediation is led by students who are trained in the peer mediation process.

### Determining When to Use This Intervention

Peer mediation/conflict management is best utilized to resolve misunderstandings and rumors between peers. It can be used for a variety of other conflicts which are non-assaultive or if further action is not needed (police intervention, suspension, dismissal etc.).  Peer mediation/ conflict management could also be used when the suspended student returns to school and needs to apologize to the victim before returning to class.

### Key Elements of Successful Programs

Peer mediation/conflict management involves the following basic steps:
• One student talks at a time, without interruption, telling his or her side of the conflict
• The other student talks, without interruption, telling his or her side of the conflict
• The two students actively listen and repeat back each others interpretation of the conflict
• The students resolve the conflict by agreeing to what they could have done differently and by offering appropriate solutions
• The students will then state what they will do differently in the future
• Both students agree that the conflict is resolved by apologizing or by other restitution

The entire mediation is monitored and directed by a neutral peer who has been trained in mediation techniques.

## Websites

**Teachers First:** He Started it! - Peer Mediation

The Resolution Center: What Is Peer Mediation?

Skills You Need: Peer Mediation

ASCD: Teaching Students to Be Peer Mediators - Educational Leadership

## Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

### Introduction

Positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) helps to create a positive school-wide climate that promotes student achievement and well-being. PBIS supports positive behavioral change through a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework that focuses on explicit teaching, re-teaching, and reinforcing of desired behaviors. Research has shown that successful implementation of PBIS results in significant reductions in problem behaviors, such as: emotional dysregulation, concentration problems, bullying, and peer rejection Bradshaw et.al, 2012). Furthermore PBIS can be instrumental in reducing office referrals and exclusionary practices (Skiba and Sprague, 2008). PBIS can also foster improvements in students' prosocial behaviors and academic achievement, in teacher self-efficacy, and in students' perception of a positive school climate (Bradshaw, 2013).

### Rationale

PBIS creates an environment that fosters positive student social emotional development. In schools that utilize office referrals and/or exclusionary practices to address problem behaviors, it has been found that these practices contribute to a more negative school climate, which is associated with increased bullying, student behavior problems, dropping out of school, and low rates of student and teacher engagement and satisfaction (Bradshaw, 2013; Sawka-Miller & Miller, 2007).

### Determining When to Use This Intervention
Positive behavior support interventions connect well with our Social Work ethics and values related to the importance of human relationships. PBIS seeks to establish a connected school culture grounded in solution focused interventions and skills building as opposed to enacting reactive and punitive discipline (Horner et al., 2009).

### Key Elements of Successful Programs
- Provide a continuum of behavioral supports and interventions across a multitiered system of
- supports, that is, universally for all students (Tier 1), selectively for at-risk populations (Tier 2),
- and individually for students exhibiting more significant behavioral problems (Tier 3).
- Universally implement clearly articulated behavioral expectations that are explicitly taught.
- Create a leadership team involving an intentional cross-positional core team, so as to ensure
- multiple perspectives. This team should be responsible for providing professional development
- and ongoing data analysis.
- Classroom or school-wide programming increases effectiveness
- Family involvement increases effectiveness
- Training including replacement behaviors must be taught and practiced by all involved
- Ensure high rates of behavior-specific praise school-wide. PBIS recommends the ratio of
- positive praise to negative interactions at 5:1.

## References

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Skiba, R., & Sprague, J. (2008). Safety without suspensions. *Educational leadership: Journal of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development,* N.E.A. 66 (pp. 38-43).

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (2002). The evolution of discipline practices: School-wide positive behavior supports. *Child & Family Behavior Therapy,* 24(1-2), 23-50.

### Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

Minnesota Department of Education: PBIS

National Education Association: PBIS Intervention

National Association of Elementary School Principals: Getting Started

PBIS Practices Implementation: Four Stages of Implementation

Positive Behavioral Intervention & Supports: Getting Started

### Websites

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports: https://www.pbis.org/

Midwest PBIS Network: Midwest PBIS Network

Northwest Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Network: Northwest PBIS Network: Home

PBISapps: PBISApps.org — The Makers of the SWIS Suite | Home


## Positive School Climate

### Introduction
School social workers are integral in promoting and maintaining a positive school climate by facilitating overall respect and trust amongst students and staff. The Center for Research on School Safety, School Climate and Classroom Management (2006) states that "a positive school climate exists when all students feel comfortable, wanted, valued, accepted and secure in an environment where they can interact with caring people they trust."  By improving a school climate, culture and conditions, students' learning also improves.  Positive school climate includes the physical structure of a school building and the interactions between students and teachers (Marshall, 2003).

### Rationale
Research has shown that positive school climate has been associated with fewer behavioral and emotional problems for students (Reaves et al., 2018) and can increase achievement levels and reduce maladaptive behavior (McEvoy & Welker, 2000).  In addition, there is an increased job satisfaction for school personnel (Malinen & Savolainen, 2016).  School social workers help promote a positive school climate by communicating with parents about their child(ren), meeting with staff and administration when there are concerns and fostering a climate of respect for all.

### Determining When to Use This Intervention

The Center for Research on School Safety, School Climate and Classroom Management (2006) suggests the following possible interventions to improve school climate:
- Increased parent and community involvement
- Implementation of character education or the promotion of fundamental moral values in children
- Use of violence prevention and conflict resolution curricula
- Peer mediation
- Prevention of acts of bullying (Peterson & Skiba, 2001)
- Teachers and principals treat students fairly, equally, and with respect
- Provide a safe environment for staff and students (Harris & Lowery, 2002)

### *Key Elements of Successful Programs*
According to the Center for Research on School Safety, School Climate and Classroom (2006) positive school climate includes:
- Respect
- Trust
- High morale
- Opportunity for input
- Continuous academic and social growth
- Cohesiveness
- School renewal
- Caring

The School Climate Survey contains seven dimensions of school climate:
- Achievement motivation
- Fairness
- Order and discipline
- Parent involvement
- Sharing of resources
- Student interpersonal relationships
- Student-teacher relationships

Joyce Epstein (1995) states that frequent and positive school-to-home communication helps parents feel more self-confident, more comfortable with the school and more likely to become involved. She points out the need for teachers and schools to increase their understanding and respect for student and family diversity.  School staff can let parents know that they are valued and acknowledge their time constraints and familial obligations (Epstein 1995) thus establishing a positive relationship with families.

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### Literature References

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Creating a Positive School Climate: http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/fas/pdf/3.pdf

### School Climate Resources

School Climate and Social and Emotional Learning: SEL_-_School_Climate.pdf

American Institutes for Research: AIR_Intersection-School-Climate-and-Social-and-Emotional-Development-February-2017.pdf

American Institutes for Research: AIR_Best_Practices_School_Climate.pdf

American Institutes for Research: THE 13 DIMENSIONS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE MEASURED BY THE CSCI

Kaiser Permanente: Thriving Schools

### Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

The School Climate Survey School Development Program - Yale: Collection: School Development Program, Child Study Center, School of Medicine, Yale University, records

The NASSP School Climate Survey National Association of Secondary School Principals: School Climate and Safety | NASSP

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Marshall, M. L. (2004). *Examining school climate: Defining factors and educational influences.* Georgia State University Center for School Safety, School Climate and Classroom Management website. schoolsafety.education.gsu.edu › whitepaper_marshall

**Websites**

The Center for Research on School Safety, School Climate and Classroom Management: The Center for Research on School Safety, School Climate and Classroom Management i: Home

Minnesota Department of Education: School Climate & Safe and Supportive Schools Act

## Preassessment Teams

### *Introduction*
In Minnesota, the legal definition of the teams' purpose is early identification of needs and prevention initiatives for student chemical use problems (Minnesota Statutes 121A.25-26 Chemical Abuse and School Pre-assessment Teams ). However, in many schools, the pre-assessment team deals with other issues. An example is a pre-assessment team often called Multi-Tiered System of Support or MTSS team is a school student services team that provides a process to address student assistance needs and address behaviors of concern that are interfering with student learning, growth and development.

### *Rationale*
The team function is to select the most appropriate plan/referral for the student's problems. School social workers are the members of pre-assessment teams that address social and emotional needs and help the team recognize the strengths of every student.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*
The pre-assessment team as described here is used to determine what further services or skill intervention a student needs and what level of response is suggested. School staff can provide the needed services or an outside community resource may be needed. When the problem is an academic one, the student may be referred to targeted intervention services or special education. When there is a need for case management by a case manager or case monitor, one will be assigned.

### *Key Elements of a Successful Program*

According to the Minnesota Comprehensive Prevention Model for Schools, the four coordinating strategies are:
- Engaging school and community partners
- Assessment of need, setting goals
- Planning and implementation
- Evaluation

## References

Minnesota Department of Education, Safe and Healthy Learners
Ruth Ellen Luehr, MS, RN, FNASN
Telephone 651 582 8403
Fax 651 582 8499
E-mail  ruthellen.luehr@state.mn.us

Minnesota Institute for Public Health and Central CAPT
Roger Svendsen, M.S., C.ES.

Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Guidelines for School Health Programs to Prevent Tobacco Use and Addiction, https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00026213.htm

Minnesota Statutes: ection number(s)  (§)(§)121A.25-26;  121A.29

Franklin, C., Harris, M. B., & Allen-Meares, P. (Eds.) (2006). *The school services sourcebook: A guide for school-based professionals*. Oxford University Press.

## Websites

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Evidenced Based Practice Resource Center: samhsa.gov/ebp-resource-center
1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727)

Minnesota Department of Education: Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)

Minnesota Department of Education:  Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

 Minnesota Department of Education: School Safety Technical Assistance Council

## Respect for Diversity

### Introduction
The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Standards for Professional Practice for School Social Workers states that "school social workers shall ensure that students and their families are provided services within the context of multicultural understanding and competence that enhance family's support of students' learning experience." The NASW Code of Ethics for all social workers

states that social workers should follow the ethical standards of cultural competence and social diversity (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2008).

## Rationale

As school social workers, we must elevate our personal cultural consciousness to understand how our identity shapes how we see ourselves and others. Not only do our social norms and cultural underpinnings influence our experiences, they also set the course for how we view the world (Graham & Schiele, 2010). In the US and Minnesota, children of all backgrounds are experiencing a time in which discussions about race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and culture are at the forefront of their everyday lives. It is up to the school social worker to embrace these discussions and model for school staff how to openly talk about race, bias, and racism.

## Determining When to Use This Intervention

Competent assessment practices should be the basis for which intervention decisions are made. Assessment of problems may include psycho-educational or mental health screening/ evaluation in the areas of cognition, academic achievement, learning and socio-behavioral functioning using tools that are both norm-referenced as well as other tools that gather qualitative information (NASW, 2015). For example, student, family and staff interviews are equally important in gathering information.    School staff must consider all assessment information within the social cultural context of the student and their family (NASW, 2015).

## Key Elements of Successful Programs

"Cultural competence refers to a set of congruent practice skills, knowledge, behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system that enables the system to work effectively in cross cultural situations" (Lambros & Barrio, 2006).

- When a student is referred for screening, evaluation or service, carefully review the referral reason and consider it within the cultural norms and expectations of the student, family, teacher, classroom environment and school.
- Remember that families may differ in terms of their family composition, child rearing practices, response to disobedience and perception of disability/health, communication and interpersonal styles.
- Refine the ability to recognize the limits of your own multicultural competence.
- All educators should seek educational, consultative and training experiences to improve multicultural knowledge.

## References

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Davis, A., & Barat, F. (2016). *Freedom is a constant struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the foundations of a movement.* Haymarket Books.

Fadiman, A. (2012). *The spirit catches you and you fall down: A Hmong child, her American doctors, and the collision of two cultures.* Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

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Kivel, P. (2002). *Uprooting racism: How white people can work for racial justice (rev. ed.).* New Society.

McIntosh, P. (1988). *White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in women's studies.* Wellesley College, Center for Research on Women.

Oluo, I. (2018). *So you want to talk about race.* Perseus.

Potapchuk, M., Leiderman, S., Bivens, D., & Major, B. (2005). *Flipping the script: White privilege and community building.* Center for Assessment and Policy Development.

## Examples of Models, Resources and Programs

National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Cultural Standards (2015): https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=PonPTDEBrn4%3d&portalid=0

Minnesota Department of Education: Cultural Competency Trainings / Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB)

## Screening

### *Introduction*
School social workers can utilize a number of screening tools to better assess the needs of students. For example, screening for substance abuse, risk of suicide, mental health and other emotional and behavioral problems gives school staff a basis for underlying concerns.  Since school social workers are educated in recognizing the early warning signs of mental illness, as well as ruling in or out a number of other concerns, they can be integral in the planning and implementation of interventions. Using a variety of screening tools also assists teachers and other staff to recognize the need for increased services and/or referring for a special education evaluation.

Susan De La Paz and Steve Graham state that when Congress enacted Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, in November, 1975, it requires that all children with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education.

### Rationale

Recent government figures indicate that 7 percent of children and youth from birth to 21 are identified as having a disability that requires special intervention (Hunt & Marshall, 1994). Providing screening to determine if the student has a disability or other possible health concern is one of the roles of a school social worker. School social workers may also screen families in order to provide appropriate links to community resources, when needed.

### Determining When to Use This Intervention

While practices differ greatly both across and within states, screening is an important part of the assessment process mandated by Public Law 94-142. Screening for the purpose of special diagnoses begins at birth and continues throughout the school years. In the first few years of life, most forms of screening center around developmental norms for physical, cognitive and language abilities. Many children with severe disabilities (Down's syndrome, autism, severe sensory impairments, or children with multiple disabilities, for example) are identified early in life by physicians and other health professionals. However, other children, such as those with learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders, behavioral problems and so forth, may not be formally identified until they start school.

Screening procedures are an important part of the assessment process to identify children and youth who have disabilities. Such procedures must be used with care, however, as they provide only a preliminary sign that a child has a disability. Additional testing is required to affirm or disprove the presence of a disabling condition. If a disability is identified during follow- up assessment, the focus shifts to providing the student with an appropriate education, which could include a 504 Plan or Individual Education Program.

Screening is an important part of the prereferral process.  School social workers are educated in providing appropriate screening for mental health issues, emotional behavioral disorders and other school-related problems.  Completing a social developmental history is also a good tool to gather more information about the family.

Screening can also be used to implement interventions because it allows school staff to understand the possible underlying behavior of the individual student.  Screening may also be completed by the school social worker during the preschool screening, as well as the mental health screening to meet Emotional Behavioral Disorder criteria and after a student is suspended for 10 days.

### Key Elements of Successful Programs

It is important to understand that there is no standard or uniform battery of tests, checklists, or procedures to follow for the identification of most students with disabilities. While there is a basic structure to the identification process, there is considerable variability in how students may come to be identified, including the types of tests used in screening and the processes by which they are referred.

A common prereferral intervention approach includes a pre-assessment team (MTSS - Multi-tiered Student Supports) which may include teachers, principal, nurse, school counselor, school psychologist, alcohol, tobacco and other drug counselor, liaison officer and the school social worker. The team works to provide appropriate interventions to use in the classroom to accommodate student needs better.  If the interventions do not produce results, the school social worker may screen the student for possible emotional behavioral disorder, mental health concern or environmental factors.

## Literature References, Models, and Websites

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## Models

*Please see the mental health screening section and social developmental history example in the appendix.

## Websites

Screening and early detection of mental health problems in children and adolescents: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7117/

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): Mental Health Screening

Ericae: Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation: Screening for Special Online Education Diagnoses. ERIC Digest., de La Paz, Susan; Graham, Steve

President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education Report: ED473830 - A New Era: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and Their Families., 2002-Jul-1


## Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

### *Introduction*
Social and emotional education is school-based programming that focuses on positive youth development, health promotion, prevention of problems behaviors and student engagement of learning. School social workers play a key role in the social and emotional development of students by attending to their basic needs, developing social skills and fostering a caring and

nurturing environment. According to The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) (2004), social and emotional learning (SEL) is "the process of acquiring the skills to recognize and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships and handle challenging situations effectively. Research has shown that SEL is fundamental to children's social and emotional development - their health, ethical development, citizenship, academic learning and motivation to achieve.

### *Rationale*

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) promotes students' attachment to school.  SEL also has a critical role in improving children's academic performance and lifelong learning (Zins, 2004). Studies have shown that emotions can facilitate or hamper students' learning and their ultimate success in school. Because social and emotional factors play such an important role, schools must attend to this aspect of the educational process for the benefit of all students (Zin, 2004). Researchers have also found that prosocial behavior in the classroom is linked with positive intellectual outcomes.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*

Social emotional skills can and should be infused into the regular academic curriculum (Zins, 2004). Teachers can be trained to promote social emotional skills woven into the regular instruction.  School social workers can assist teachers in the development of the skill training, or they can complete a whole classroom discussion/lesson about social emotional skills.  School social workers may also pull specific students out of the classroom for small group or individual promotion of social emotional skills.

### *Key Elements of Successful Programs*

Successful programs include a person-centered focus, along with a supportive environment. SEL education involves teaching children to be self-aware, socially cognizant, able to make responsible decisions and competent in self-management and relationship management skills so as to foster their academic success (Zins, 2004).

According to Zins (2004) essential characteristics of effective SEL programming:
•       Carefully planned, theory and research-based interventions
•       Teaches SEL skills for application to daily life
•       Addresses affective and social dimensions of learning
•       Leads to coordinated, integrated and unified programming linked to academic outcomes

SEL education promotes safe and caring learning environment, monitors intervention, provides leadership, institutional policies aligned with SEL goals, professional development, involves families and community partnerships and uses program evaluation for continuous improvement.

### References

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. www.casel.org

Zins, J. E., Bloodworth, M. R., Weissberg, R. P., & Walberg, H. J., (2004). The scientific base linking social and emotional learning to school success. Building academic success on social and emotional

learning: what does the research say? In J. E. Zins, R. P. Weissberg, M. C. Wang, & H. J. Walberg (Eds.), *Building academic success on social and emotional learning: What does the research say?* (pp. 3–22). Teachers College Press.

## Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

Seattle Social Development Project: http://depts.washington.edu/ssdp/

Resolving Conflict Creatively Program: http://www.edutopia.org/php/orgs

Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies: http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/model/programs/PATHS.html

Child Development Project: http://www.devstu.org/cdp/

Responsive Classroom: www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/aboutrc.html

## Websites

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning: www.casel.org

About our Kids: http://www.aboutourkids.org/aboutour/articles/socialemotional.html

Social Emotional Learning Resources: http://www.nprinc.com/soc_emot/index.htm

## Substance Use Prevention

### Introduction
Substance abuse prevention efforts, which includes prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD) use, have often been school-based, since schools have the greatest access to the majority of the nation's children and are well-known for providing education and collecting data from students about substance use and abuse (Burke, 2002). It is important for our students not only to be drug and alcohol free, but to learn the coping skills and problem-solving skills accompanied by good self-esteem, that will be beneficial in launching them into a healthy adult life.

### Rationale
The consequences of substance use are serious, costly and expensive, with immediate physiological influences while interfering with perception and rational judgment (McWhirter, McWhirter, & McWhirter, 2004). Adolescents may be more involved with risk-taking behaviors while under the influence, as well as having higher incidences of fatal accidents and crime (US Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2000). Also, heavy drinking and smoking can lead to diseases such as cancer, heart disease, liver-related and sexually transmitted diseases (Center for Disease Control, 2004). Finally, substance abuse has detrimental effects on the mental health of adolescents and has been associated with poor educational outcomes and academic failure (Rattermann, 2014).

### Determining When to Use This Intervention

Education in substance abuse prevention and social skills are most effective when implemented school and community wide, beginning in the elementary school years. Earlier onset of substance abuse is significantly related to heavier use and more addictive symptoms in later years, as well as more difficult rehabilitation if a problem emerges (Knowles, 2001).

The Minnesota Student Survey gives information about particular communities across the state and is helpful in designing a prevention program that fits the needs of one's own school district. Districts can institute their own ATOD and violence prevention program committees that include community members such as public health, law enforcement and human services for a broader view, as well as maximizing support and coordination of services within each community.

### *Key Elements of Successful Programs*

Many programs have been introduced to help children and adolescents refuse alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (programs can be found on the internet on the National Registry of Effective Prevention Programs), but one of the most effective to date is called Life Skills Training (LST). Research on the effectiveness of this program indicates a 50-87% reduction in the prevalence of ATOD (National Health Promotion Associates, 2002). This is designed for the complete student population in a student to provider ratio of 25:1 to allow for discussion. The main objectives in the program include:

- providing students with skills to resist peer pressure, developing greater self-esteem and self-confidence
- helping students learn to cope with social anxiety
- increasing students' knowledge of the consequences of use
- enhancing students' cognitive and behavioral competency to reduce and prevent a variety of health risk behaviors (National Health Promotion Associates, 2002)

Overall goals of a successful program will include teaching prevention-related information, promoting anti-drug norms, teaching drug refusal skills and fostering the development
of personal self-management skills and general social skills (National Health Promotion Associates, 2002).

It is helpful for the entire community to support substance abuse prevention and can do so in a variety of settings, including summer camps, after-school programs and community-based organizations (NHPA, 2002). Also, many schools often offer small group opportunities through their school social worker or other support staff, providing additional support and education for high-risk students.

In the National Institute on Drug Abuse website (see below), it is stated that the most important protective factors, as well as risks, come from within the family, but include factors that influence a child in other environments. Among protective factors identified by NIDA research are strong bonds and clear rules of conduct within a family, involvement of parents in a child's life, successful school performance, strong bonds with positive institutions such as school
and religious organizations and a child's agreement with the social norm that drug use is not acceptable.

### References

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Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2004). *Youth risk behavior surveillance: United States, 2003.* U.S. Dept. of Human Services.

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Rattermann, M. J. (2014). Measuring the impact of substance abuse on student academic achievement and academic growth. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 7(2), 123-135.

## Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Evidenced Based Practice Resource Center: EBP Resource Center

## Websites

National Institute on Drug Abuse: Drugabuse.gov |National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) American Public Health Association — For science. For action. For health.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: SAMHSA - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Minnesota Department of Education: Minnesota Student Survey

National Institutes of Health: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use Prevention Programs in US Schools: A  Descriptive   Summary

National Institutes of Health: State-level education standards for substance use prevention programs in schools: a systematic content analysis

## Violence Prevention and Risk Assessment

### *Introduction*
School social workers are integral in the development and implementation of programs that reduce and combat the rates of violence and harassment in schools. As school social workers, we seek to promote efforts that create safe, secure, and peaceful schools free of the destructive influence of violence in all of its forms. Highly publicized school shootings have brought the issues of school violence to the forefront of efforts by schools, parents and communities to promote safety in schools.  School social workers play an "increasingly important role in shaping and implementing policy, interventions, and procedures that make US schools safer" (Astor et al, 2006).  Since children spend so many hours in school throughout their lives, "programs in the school setting have the potential to have a strong impact on their attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs about violence" (Astor, et al, 2006).

## Rationale

Schools must implement purposeful, coordinated strategies that increase levels of safety and security that simultaneously promote student wellness and resilience. According to the most recent Minnesota Student Survey 87 percent of Minnesota students report feeling safe at home, at school, in their neighborhood and going to and from school. This number is down from 90 percent in 2016 (MDH, 2019).

## Determining When to Use This Intervention

School social workers need tools to assess and monitor rates of school violence and of risk and protective factors that have probabilistic linkages to its occurrence (Mattaini, 2006). It has been suggested that when a threat assessment is conducted, the threat is not carried out (Miller, 2014).

Bowen (2006) suggests using the following steps to identify issues that will help overcome barriers that restrict prevention strategies:
- Conduct a status quo assessment
- Define desired results
- Identify key partners and allies
- Develop an action plan with each partner and ally
- Specify the role and responsibilities of the performance team
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan
- Develop plans to overcome potential implementation hurdles

## Key Elements of Successful Programs

Threat assessment is a violence prevention strategy that involves: (a) identifying student threats to commit a violent act, (b) determining the seriousness of the threat, and (c) developing intervention plans that protect potential victims and address the underlying problem or conflict that stimulated the threatening behavior. Astor et al (2006), recommend the following key points when developing a successful violence prevention program:

- Comprehensive, intensive, ecological, and require "buy in" from school and community
- Raise the awareness and responsibility of students, teachers, and parents regarding the types of violence in their schools
- Create clear guidelines and rules for all members of the school community
- Target the various social systems in the school and clearly communicate to the entire school community what procedures should be followed before, during and after violent events
- Focus on getting the school staff, students, and parents involved in the programs.
- Often fit easily into the normal flow and mission of the school setting
- Use faculty, staff, and parents in the school setting to plan, implement, and sustain the program
- Increase monitoring and supervision in non classroom areas
- Include ongoing monitoring and mapping, which provide information that schools can use to tailor a program to their specific needs and increase its chance of success

Mattaini (2006) indicates that cultures that are effective in reducing violence are characterized by four interlocking components:
- Recognizing contributions and successes
- Acting with respect

- Sharing power to build community
- Making peace

## Examples of Models, Resources. and Programs

Minnesota Dept. of Education; Responding to Trauma and Tragedy:
https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/safe/res/resp/

Colorado School Safety Resource: https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cssrc/threat-assessment

The Virginia Model:
https://curry.virginia.edu/faculty-research/centers-labs-projects/research-labs/youth-violence-project/virginia-student-threat

School Safety.Gov: https://www.schoolsafety.gov/prevent/threat-assessment-and-reporting

FAST Track- Families and Schools Together: http://www.fasstrackproject.org

U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center: http://www.ustreas.gov/usss/ntac.shtml

School Success Profile: http://www.schoolsuccessprofile.org/

## References

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Sprague, J., & Waler, H. (2000). Early identification and intervention for youth with antisocial and violent behavior. *Exceptional children*, 66, 367-379.

## Websites

PREPaRE: https://www.nasponline.org/professional-development/prepare-training-curriculum

Prevention Institute: http://www.Preventioninstitute.org/

Center for Disease Control National Center for Injury Prevention and Control: Division of Violence Prevention: http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/bestpractices.htm

Department of Education Safe and Drug Free Schools: http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/index.html?src=mr

Minnesota School Safety Center: https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/mn-school-safety-center/Pages/prevention-threats.aspx

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Prevention Research Center for the Promotion of Human Development: http://www.prevention.psu.edu


## Trauma Informed Schools

### *Introduction*
Adversity, trauma, and toxic stress can impair a students' ability to thrive in school, at home, and in the community. Given the widespread prevalence of childhood adversity and trauma, promoting a trauma-informed school approach has the greatest potential to positively impact all students, regardless of trauma history. School social workers are uniquely trained to deliver high-quality,

evidence-based mental services in schools to ensure that all students have access to the support they need to thrive. Utilizing a trauma-informed framework, school social workers are also able to provide education to other school staff as to develop a shared understanding regarding the impact of trauma and adversity on students. As a trauma-informed school community, educators can develop positive and culturally responsive discipline policies that focus on teaching students new skills to cope with and manage their triggers (Greene, 2016). It is also important to note that trauma-informed school approaches fit well within Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) frameworks (Eber and Barrett, 2017).

### Determining When to Use This Intervention
Schools are the most common location for children to receive mental health services (Farmer, Burns, Phillips, Angold, & Costello, 2003). School social workers are able to address the negative academic, behavioral, and psychological impact of trauma on students by adopting a trauma-informed approach. The trauma-informed approach is not an intervention; rather, it is a way of providing services to children and families that facilitates the improved functioning of those negatively affected by trauma (Keesler, 2014).

### Key Elements of Successful Programs
A trauma-informed response to behaviors include re-teaching expectations, recognizing that behavior is communication and providing students with unconditional regard for them as a person, even when their behavior is difficult. Social work methods, such as self determination, strengths perspective, rapport building are methods the SSWs utilize to mitigate the effects of toxic stress. Effective trauma-informed schools promote (Menschner & Maul, 2016):
   a. feelings of physical, social, and emotional safety in students and staff;
   b. a shared understanding among staff about the impact of trauma (including historical and intergenerational trauma) and adversity;
   c. access to comprehensive school mental and behavioral health services; and
   d. community collaboration.
   e. developing and supporting a sustainable system that builds school staff's ability to effectively work with traumatized individuals, which requires that caregivers take care of themselves and find a work/life balance (SaintA, 2017).

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https://sainta.org/trauma-informed-care/seven-essential-ingredients/

Souers, K., & Hall, P. A. (2016). *Fostering resilient learners: Strategies for creating a trauma-sensitive classroom*. ASCD.

## Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS):
https://www.cebc4cw.org/program/collaborative-proactive-solutions/

Helping Traumatized Children Learn: https://traumasensitiveschools.org

National Child Traumatic Stress Network "Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators": http://www.nctsn.org/

RAND-How Schools Can Help Students Recover from Traumatic Experiences A Tool Kit for Supporting Long-Term Recovery:
https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2006/RAND_TR413.pdf

Saint A Wisconsin Trauma Informed Care: https://sainta.org/trauma-informed-care

Sanctuary Model The Sanctuary Model: http://sanctuaryweb.com/Home.aspx

SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP):
https://ncsacw.samhsa.gov/userfiles/files/SAMHSA_Trauma.pdf

The Trauma & Learning Policy Initiative:  http://traumasensitiveschools.org/

University of Washington CLEAR Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience: http://ext100.wsu.edu/clear/about/

## Websites

AMBIT:  http://www.cehd.umn.edu/fsos/projects/ambit/

Childhood Trauma Changing Minds: https://changingmindsnow.org

Educator Policy Innovation Center (EPIC) from Exclusionary to Restorative:
https://www.educationminnesota.org/EDMN/media/edmn-files/advocacy/EPIC/EPIC-student-discipline-report.pdf

Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota:  www.pcamn.org

Harvard's Center on the Developing Child: http://developingchild.harvard.edu/about/

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**Family Services**
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## Conferences

### *Introduction*

Most schools have a special time set aside once or twice a year when the parents of the students are invited into the school for a meeting with the teacher about how their child is doing in school. Parents of students in special education are invited to meet with school personnel generally twice a year. School social workers often play an important role in helping parents attend and feel positive about these meetings.

School social workers help bridge the gap between the home and the school through their frequent contact with the student's parents. They can help parents know what to expect when attending meetings at school and can help them understand and be prepared for the process used to conduct these meetings.  School social workers can also meet with school personnel to help create a welcoming climate for diverse parents. Additionally, school social workers can facilitate efforts to reach out to the families with children in the schools they serve.

### *Rationale*

The literature documents the importance of parent involvement in the education of their children and adolescents and shows that students who have families which are committed to their education do better academically and behaviorally (Goodall, 2017; Hampden-Thompson & Galindo, 2017; Fisher, 2003). Parents often face barriers in attending school conferences and meetings to discuss their child.  Problems such as transportation, scheduling, need for translation or a past negative experience with the school system may serve as major disincentives. School social workers can help mediate these problems by arranging for transportation, advocating for a meeting time when parents can attend, locating translators and meeting with the parents ahead of time so that they understand how important they are to the process of their child's education.  School social workers can also work with school personnel to make sure that the school environment is welcoming for parents by having someone who can greet them warmly when they come into school and offer a beverage if they have to wait.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*
Efforts to connect positively with parents should be ongoing.

### Key Elements of Successful Programs
In Epstein and Janson (2004) suggest the following are steps to encourage and support parents' involvement in school conferences and meeting:
•       Ask the school administrator to let families know how important it is to attend these events
•       Ask the school administrator encourage the faculty to reach out to parents
•       Publicize these conference and meetings throughout the year in flyers and newsletters
•       Set goals for parent attendance at conferences and meetings and monitor progress on the goals

In addition to the above suggestions school social workers can talk with teachers about strategies for

successful parent-teacher conferences.  For example, it is always nice to start by first asking parents what questions or concerns they have about school and their child. This shows the parents that their concerns are important enough to be given priority. School social workers can also talk with teachers about the value of identifying and sharing a student's strengths before describing behaviors that may be a concern. All students have strengths and it can be relationship building when parents learn that the teacher recognizes their child's strengths. At times, when parents are not able to attend conferences and meetings at school, a school social worker can work with faculty to come up with more accessible locations. Akron, Ohio moved parent-teacher conferences to a local shopping mall because of low attendance. Interestingly, the move resulted in higher turnout (Curriculum Review, 2004). Another more common form of reaching out when parents cannot come into school is for school social workers to set up and accompany teachers on home visits to meet with the parents. This approach can be helpful for several reasons.  School social workers are familiar with the practice of making home visits which can help the faculty member feel more comfortable leaving the school to go out to a home.  Parents may appreciate the special time and effort taken to reach out to them and are often more comfortable in their own environment.

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Hampden-Thompson, G., & Galindo, C. (2017). School–family relationships, school satisfaction and the academic achievement of young people. *Educational Review, 69*(2), 248-265.

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## Family Engagement Programs

### *Introduction*
School social workers use their unique skills and systems knowledge to support a variety of activities that overcome the barriers to educational success of students.  Family support programs are a method used by social workers and other school staff that have the capacity to increase the school success of all students through the engagement and welcoming of families into the school environment.

### *Rationale*
Is it widely accepted among educational professionals that parental involvement with school has been linked to academic success, good school attendance, and positive behavior and social skills (Alameda, 2003; Epstein, 1996; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; McNeal, 1999). Despite this, many family members are hesitant to become involved with their child's
education. One reason for this hesitation may be that they had a negative personal experience with school during their childhood and adolescence. Parents or other family members may feel intimidated or judged by school personnel.  In addition, many family members of children with

disabilities or other barriers to learning often receive multiple negative messages about their child from educators. This may lead to defensiveness and poor communication.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*
Family support programs are commonly used when parents appear to lack the skills, time or motivation to become involved in the school environment in traditional ways (volunteering in a classroom, attending parent-teacher conferences). Careful assessment of families' needs, families' strengths and community resources available should be considered when deciding the type of family support program a school may want to implement.

Examples of family support program activities may include, but are not limited to:
•        Parent support groups to connect parents with one another
•        Food or clothing shelves available at a school
•        Information and referral to community agencies that will support families
•        Recreational or cultural events at school that allow families to have fun together
•        Educational opportunities that may focus on parenting skills

### *Key Elements of Successful Programs*
In order to build successful partnerships with families there are several basic assumptions and beliefs that school social workers utilize in their work.  School social workers believe that parents are the first and most important educator in their child's life and that parents love their child more and know their child better than any of the staff at school. If school staff truly believes that a parent or guardian's presence at school is valued and necessary, parents will feel more welcomed and respected. This is key to building the trust that is needed for effective communication between parents and school staff.

Family support programs can be an effective way to increase parental involvement with a school. School social workers can be a vital component of a successful family support program, linking home, school and community. A successful family support program may require that schools ask the question "How can the school support parents and families" rather than "How can parents help the school" (Franklin et al., 2006).

## References

Franklin, C., Harris, M. B., & Allen-Meares, P. (2006). *The school services sourcebook: A guide for school-based professionals.* Oxford University Press. NASW Standards for School Social Work Services

## Examples Models, Resources & Programs

Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M.G., Simon, B. S., Salinas,  K. C., Jansorn, N. R…. Williams, K. J. (2002). School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action (2nd ed.). Corwin. Epstein's Model for Parental Involvement

## Websites

Parent Partnership in Education: Resource Roundup

Family and Community

## Grandparents

"Grandparent caregivers are real-life safety nets, keeping the children they love safe and their families together when birth parents are unable or unwilling to parent" (Minnesota Board on Aging, 2007).

### *Introduction*
In 2007, the Minnesota Kinship Care Association reported that there were 33,975 children in the state who lived in households headed by grandparents. Many live with their grandparents because their parents are deceased or have a drug or alcohol addiction or a serious emotional, behavioral and/or physical problem (Pebley & Rudkin, 1999). Often, the children and the grandparents are both in need of support and community resources to deal with the stress and adjustment that comes with the new family configuration and the trauma of dealing with feelings about whatever incapacitated the parent. It is important for the grandparents and the children to receive the support and resources they need for the children to do well in school (All Family Resource Organization, 2007). School social workers are well-equipped to assist these families in connecting with the needed resources (Edwards & Daire, 2006).

### *Rationale*
Grandparents who assume the responsibility of raising their grandchildren generally do it to keep them safe and out of the foster care system and because they may be "the only family members willing to assume care of these children" (Edwards & Daire, 2006, p. 113). The
All Family Resource Organization (2007) points out grandparents often underestimate the significant financial and emotional burdens involved in their new role as parents. Resuming primary parental responsibilities at a time in life when grandparents are looking forward to more freedom and free time can be very stressful and create a range of negative feelings. In fact, "assuming full-time parenting responsibilities for grandchildren is associated with increased psychological distress in grandparent caregivers" (Kelly, Yorker, Whitley & Sipe 2001, p.29). School social workers can help reduce stress and social isolation by connecting grandparents with others in a similar situation and by accessing needed resources such as respite care and after-school programs.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*
School social workers should talk with their building administrators about regularly (at least quarterly) sending information home with students about resources and services available for grandparents who are the primary caregiver for their grandchildren. It would be important to obtain permission from the administrator to ask teachers to distribute resource information for grandparents who have custody of their grandchildren at parent-teacher conferences.

### *Key Elements of Successful Programs*
Edwards and Daire (2006) identify the following key elements of successful programs for working with grandparents who are parenting their grandchildren:
- Use a strengths-based approach (grandparents have a lot to offer the child and the school in terms of insight and perspective)
- Let grandparents know about resources that can provide respite  support groups that are available
- community-based counseling

- after-school services
- medical and dental care
- financial assistance
- recreational activities such as sports and music program
- summer camps
- extra-curricular activities
- assistance coordinating services
- homework help

School social workers can meet with grandparents who are parenting their grandchildren to learn from them if there are areas in which they would like additional support.  Once an area of need has been identified by the grandparents, the school social worker can provide contact information and can facilitate the process of accessing that resource. School social workers can also serve as school-based case managers for grandparents who may need assistance coordinating the multiple services their grandchild may require. It is also important for school social workers to consult with school personnel to make sure that all types of families, including those headed by grandparents, feel welcome and valued when interacting with the school. A wonderful resource for grandparents who care for their grandchildren is First Steps: Getting Started Raising Relatives' Children by the Minnesota Kinship Caregivers Association (2007). This resource manual offers information about common feelings grandparent caregivers have, documentation that they should keep, journaling tips, legal options, financial help, health insurance, affordable child care, understanding children's issues, children's mental health services, fetal alcohol syndrome and talking with children about their parents.

## References

AARP. (2003). Lean on Me: Support and Minority Outreach for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

All Family Resources. (2007). *Grandparents raising grandchildren.* http://www.familymanagement.com/facts/english/grandparents_kids.html

Edwards, O., & Daire, A., (2006). School-age children raised by their grandparents: Problems and solutions. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 33(2), 113-118.

Gerard, J. M., Landry-Meyer, & Roe J., G. (2006). Grandparents raising grandchildren: The role of social support in coping with caregiving challenges. *International Journal of Aging & Human Development,* 62(4), 359-384.

Kelley, S., Yorker, B., Whitley, D., & Sipe, T. (2001). A multimodal intervention for grandparents raising grandchildren: Results of an exploratory study. *Child Welfare League of America*, 80(1), 27-50.

Minnesota Board on Aging. (2007). *Grandparents raising children*. http://www.mnaging.org/admin/grandparents.htm

Minnesota Kinship Care Association. (2007). *Raising grandchildren*. Kinship Family Support Services

Pebley, A. & Rudkin, L. (1999). Grandparents caring for grandchildren: What do we know? *Journal of Family Issues*, *20*(2), 218-242.

<p align="center">**Websites**</p>

Minnesota Board on Aging / Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA)

AARP – Grandparent Information Center
Toll-free: 1-800-434-3410
An extensive range of services, including a listing of local support groups, newsletters, and useful publications. AARP® Official Site - Join & Explore the Benefits

Minnesota Children and Youth with Special Health Needs
Minnesota Department of Health
Child and Family Health (CFH) Division
P.O. Box 64882
St. Paul, MN 55164-0882
651-201-3650 or toll free 1-800-728-5420
Children and Youth with Special Health Needs (CYSHN)

Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER) PACER Center - Champions for Children with Disabilities
Phone 952.838.9000
Toll-free: 800.537.2237

A U.S. Government website on Grandparents Raising Children. It has many resources regarding financial program and research: Adoption, Foster Care, and Other Child Related Issues

Kinship Caregiver Resources

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren - Grandparenting - Legal Issue: custody, guardianship, adopting grandchildren, and grandparent rights,

Minnesota Kinship Caregivers Association: Kinship Family Support Services

Delegation of Parental Authority information: https://mnkinshipcaregivers.blogspot.com/


**Homework And Academic Assistance**

*Introduction*
Considerable research documents that children generally do better in school when their families are involved in positive ways with their education (Epstein, 1991; Henderson & Berla, 1994). School social workers can assist families in understanding what the research says about family involvement in the education of their children and how important they are to the process.

*Rationale*

When parents are involved, students often "have better attendance records, drop out less often, have higher aspirations and more positive attitudes toward school and homework" (Bogenschneider & Johnson, 2004, p. 20). Helping children learn at home is the type of family involvement most likely to improve school success (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). School social workers function as home-school conduits and can assist in establishing ways families can help students successfully complete their homework.

### Determining When to use This Intervention
All families should be encouraged to have a daily homework time set each night. However, Berger (2006) reports that for some families who work long hours outside of the home and who have limited language or math skills it may be almost impossible for them to help their school- age family members with homework. In these situations school social workers can help the family connect with after-school programs that they might not know about such as the Girl's and Boy's Club where after-school help with homework is available.

### Key Elements of Successful Programs
School social workers should encourage families to:
• Set a specific time each night for homework
• Help explain and monitor the homework
• Praise the effort put into the homework

School social workers can also problem-solve with parents about difficulties they encounter around homework. For example, they can help set up and encourage a sustained communication system such as a notebook of assignments that goes back and forth daily from the school to the home. This type of a system allows the family to know what homework is due the next day on a routine basis and provides a way for the family to let the teacher know how the homework session went. School social workers can also put "tip sheets" about how to help school-age children with homework in school newsletters and can make handouts for teachers to distribute at school conferences.

## References

Berger, J. (11/1/2006). For Hispanic parents, lessons on helping with the homework. *New York Times, 156*(53750), pp. B11-B11.

Bogenschneider, K., & Johnson, C. (2004). Family involvement in education: How important is it? What can legislators do? In K. Bogenschneider & E. Gross (Eds.), *A policymaker's guide to school finance: Approaches to use and questions ask* (Wisconsin Family Impact Seminar Briefing Report No. 20, 54 pages). University of Wisconsin Center for Excellence in Family Studies.

Fishel, M., & Ramirez, L. (2005). Evidence-based parent involvement interventions with school-aged children. *School Psychology Quarterly, 20*(4), 371-402.

Henderson, A. T., & Berla, N. (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievemen*t (A report from the National Committee for Citizens in Education). Center for Law and Education.

Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement.* National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools.

Kelley, M. F., & Battle-Bailey, L. (2004). Interactive homework for increasing parent involvement and student reading achievement. *Childhood Education*, *81*(1), 36-40.

## Websites

Better, easiest and cheapest way to find answers, help with your homework, or get a personal teacher!

Khan Academy | Free Online Courses, Lessons & Practice: A nonprofit with the mission to provide a free, world-class education for anyone, anywhere.


## Home Visits

### Introduction
Home visits are an important way to help the school connect with families. School social workers have been conducting home visits since the early 1900's to increase the teamwork between home and school and to address a range of problems that have an impact on students' ability to be successful in school (Shaffer, 2007). Home visits can foster communication, encourage family involvement and address problems that inhibit academic achievement (Sanders, 2000; Reglin, 2002).

### Rationale
A home visit "provides a direct link between the school and the home; allows for observation and assessment of the home environment; makes services more accessible to some families; may minimize power imbalance in the helping relationship; allows for teaching and modeling of parenting skills in the natural environment" and is a way to engage families who lack the transportation and/or childcare necessary to attend school meetings or who are uncomfortable in the school setting (Allen & Tracy, 2004 as cited in Tracy & Usaj, 2007, p. 148). One study reported that more than 91% of 80 people surveyed agreed that home visits by school personnel were important to help better support their child's education and their involvement (Reglin, 2002). That same study found that respondents felt it would be especially effective if the teachers actually made the home visit; however, according to other research, that rarely happens (Milian, 2001). School social workers can facilitate the process of teachers making home visits by inviting teachers to go with them. Having a school social worker (who is familiar with making home visits and can model protocol) accompany teachers who are not accustomed to this form of connecting with families, may help the teacher feel more comfortable with this approach. Home visits have been said to "break down walls of misunderstanding" because school personnel are able to gain a fuller appreciation for the family's situation (Johnson, 2001, p. 6.).

### Determining when to use this intervention
This intervention, home visits, should never be forced upon a family. Home visits should be used when:
•        Families are new to a school

- Family members cannot come to school for meetings
- An assessment is being conducted on a student

### *Key elements of successful programs*
- Communicate in a caring and respectful manner
- Prior to the visit, learn about cultural customs that may be practiced by the family (for example, in some cultures it is not appropriate for a man and a woman to shake hands. However, do not assume that the family you are visiting practices that custom. It is important to ask about such things as how they prefer to be greeted)
- Contact the family by phone and/or in writing in advance asking for permission to make a home visit
- Clearly explain the purpose of the home visit (assessment, problem-solving, goal-setting, etc)
- Give the family a choice of meeting at home, at school or some other location in the community where they might be more comfortable
- Inform the family approximately how much time the visit will take
- Use the home visit as a chance to identify strengths in the student and the family
- During the home visit identify with the family the barriers that prevent them from coming into the school and work together to eliminate the barriers
- During the home visit really listen to what the family has to say
- Use the home visit as an opportunity to let the family know that their insights and opinions are very important
- Find out what concerns and suggestions the family has regarding their child's education

## References

Allen, S. F., & Tracy, E. (2004). Revitalizing the role of home visiting by school social workers. *Children & Schools, 26*(4), 197-208.

Johnston, T. (2001). Home Work. *Teacher Magazine*, 12(14), 6.

Lyons-Ruth, K., Melnick, S. (2004). Dose-response effect of mother-infant clinical home visiting on aggressive behavior problems in kindergarten. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, *43*(6), 699-707.

Milian, M. (2001). Schools' efforts to involve Latino families of students with visual impairments. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness, 95*(7), 389-402.

Reglin, G. (2002). Project reading and writing (R.A.W.): home visitations and the school involvement of high-risk families. *Education*, *123*(1), 1 53-161.

Sandham, J. (1999). Home visits lead to stronger ties, altered perceptions. *Education Week, 19(*14), 6.

Sanders, M. G. (2000). Creating successful school-based partnership programs with families of special needs students. *School Community Journal, 10*(2), 37-56.

Tracy, E., & Usaj, K. (2007). School social work with individuals and small groups. In L. Bye & M. Alvarez (Eds.) *School social work: Theory to practice* (pp 141-163). Brooks Cole.

Wasik, B., & Shaffer, G. (2007). Home visiting: Essential guidelines for homevisits and engaging with families. In Franklin, C., Harris, M., & Allen-Meares, P. (Eds.), *The school services sourcebook: A guide for school-based professionals* (pp. 745-752). Oxford University Press.

### Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

Multisystemic Therapy (uses a home-based model of service delivery to overcome barriers to service access and provide treatment where problems actually occur – in home, school, and community settings): http://www.musc.edu/psychiatry/research/fsrc/mst.htm

Parents as Teachers (uses home visits and a variety of other methods to provide parents with child development knowledge and parenting support: www.patnc.org

### Services To Homeless Families

School social workers are important advocates for students who are homeless as they have a working relationship with staff at community agencies and have experience serving as a liaison between students, parents, school personnel and community resources.

### *Introduction*

Homelessness is a serious problem in Minnesota especially for the large number of children and youth under the age of 18 who are homeless. According to Wilder Research (2018), nearly 3265 children who were with their parents, and 1484 youth who were on their own, were homeless on a single night in October 2018 (http://mnhomeless.org/minnesota-homeless-study/reports-and-fact-sheets/2018/2018-homeless-counts-fact-sheet-3-19.pdf).
The Wilder study defined homelessness with the same criteria used in the McKinney Act [P.L. 100-77, sec 103(2) (1), 101 stat. 485 (2001)] which is as follows:

The term "homeless" or "homeless individual" includes an individual who
(1) lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and
(2) has a primary nighttime residence that is
> (a) a supervised, publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill),
> (b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or
> (c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

(3) For youth through age 24, the definition of homelessness is expanded to include people who are not with a parent or guardian and who are staying temporarily with other relatives or friends ("couch hopping.")

Children and youth who experience homelessness have the right to receive a free, appropriate public education, ensured by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements

Act of 2001. This law requires schools to remove barriers to enrollment, attendance and success for homeless students.

The services provided under McKinney-Vento provide families the opportunity to maintain education stability for students, which is key to their educational trajectory and success. One of the priorities of the act is the provision of transportation services to allow students experiencing homelessness to remain in their school of origin (https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/ESEA/home/).

### Rationale
Youth under the age of 18 who are homeless face circumstances that generally have a detrimental impact on their academic success. For example, Wilder Research (2018) found 41 percent of homeless female youth have children; more than half of youth (54%) had been physically or sexually abused, or neglected; 54 percent experienced an out-of-home placement; 61 percent lived with a substance abuser; 60 percent witnessed abuse; and 48 percent lived with a parent/guardian with mental illness; 57 percent report significant mental health issues and 36 percent have chronic physical health problems.

The Minnesota Department of Education, with the founding guidance from the McKinney-Vento Act, included the value in the education of homeless children and youth in the Every Student Succeeds Act (MN State ESSA Plan: Title VII, Subtitle B: Education for Homeless Children and Youth, 2017). This legislation requires that each state appoint a Coordinator for Education of the Homeless and that each local educational agency provide a liaison to serve as a point-person and coordinate services for homeless youth. School social workers are often asked to serve as the liaison because "the role and functions of the homeless liaisons are so consonant with the role and function of social work" (Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Israel, 2006, p.41).  School social workers are well-prepared for work with homeless populations because much of their professional education focuses on the ability to work across systems and intervene at the individual, agency, community and policy levels.

### Determining When to Use This Intervention
School social workers should be on a first-name basis with staff at local shelters and should have a system of communication established so that they will be contacted immediately when a new child or youth enters the shelter.  School social workers also need to monitor attendance of students who miss school and check on students with attendance problems to determine what services would be helpful. In addition, school social workers can work at the community and policy level to make their voice heard about the need for affordable housing and support services for students who are homeless.

### Key Elements of Successful Programs
According to the McKinney-Vento Act, families of youth who are homeless must be informed of available assistance and the local liaison contact information This information has to be communicated in a manner that the parents can understand. Under McKinney-Vento Act homeless youth have the right to be:
•       immediately enrolled in school
•       included in with the general school population and not segregated or stigmatized by school personnel
•       allowed to stay in their current school for the remainder of the school year
•       transported to and from school

- provided meals through school meal programs
- act as a liaison with the shelters
- identify students at shelters
- welcome students referred by the shelters to the school
- assist with enrollment
- work with parents on needs
- provide clothing and school supplies
- arrange for one-on-one tutoring
- arrange transportation
- provide academic assessment
- provide counseling and emotional support
- provide breakfast and lunch
- offer staff training to be sensitive to the needs of the student and ways to be supportive

## References

Jozefowicz-Simheni, D., & Israel, I. (2006). Services to homeless students and families: The McKinney-Vento Act and its implications for school social work practice. *Children & Schools 28*(1), 37-44.

Minnesota Department of Education. (2017). *Minnesota State ESSA Plan: Title VII, Subtitle B: Education for Homeless Children and Youth.*

Wilder Research. (2018). *Youth on their own: 2018: One-day statewide study to better understand the prevalence of homelessness in Minnesota.* http://mnhomeless.org/minnesota-homeless-study/youth.php.

## Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth: https://naehcy.org/

Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program Guide: MN Housing: http://www.mnhousing.gov/sites/multifamily/fhpap

## Websites

McKinney-Vento Act: http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg116.html

Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless: http://www.mnhomelesscoalition.org/

National Coalition for the Homeless: http://www.nationalhomeless.org/

## Services To Immigrant Families

The vast majority of immigrants living in Minnesota, have come to the US legally. Over the past several decades, tens of thousands of immigrants have arrived in Minnesota. They have come from all over the world, and settled throughout the state. They've come for the same reason that attracted

immigrants in the past: opportunity and they experience the same difficulties of adjusting to life in a new country—language barriers, culture shock, a sense of loss and isolations." The Minneapolis Foundation, 2010.

## Introduction
Social workers are in a position to support immigrant children, youth and families in accessing immigration assistance and services to ensure their safety, permanency and well-being. While social workers are not expected to be experts on immigration issues, they can familiarize themselves with immigration terminology, relief options, new policies and available resources (NASW, 2013).

## Rationale
American classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse. According to the National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention (2011), immigrant children and families frequently struggle in their new communities. Some may be dealing with past traumas from persecution, conflicts, or natural disasters in their home countries. Some may have limited education or non-transferable job skills and so are unable to find sufficient work to adequately support their families. Some may have come from rural farming communities and find themselves in unfamiliar urban areas. Others may be undocumented families or parents who fear exportation, a significant stressor that may keep them from finding higher-paying jobs or receiving health care, or prevent their children from seeking higher education. Still others may be highly educated professionals who are unable to find comparable positions in their new communities.

School social workers can serve as a point of connection for these families and can assist school personnel in creating conditions that foster family involvement. They can also advocate for the schools they serve to implement the ideas presented below in the Key Elements of Successful Programs section.

## Determining When to Use This Intervention
To determine whether or not a student meets the MN Department of Education's Title III definition of an immigrant child and youth, a school and/or district should not ask about a student, parent, guardian, or sponsor's citizenship or immigration status or date of entry into the United States. Such information has no bearing on whether or not the student meets the definition of immigrant child or youth for Title III purposes, and may create a chilling effect that could discourage students and families from enrolling in school.

Rather, for purposes of determining if a student meets the definition of immigrant children and youth under Title III, district and charter school staff should request only information about a student's date of birth, place of birth, and prior school enrollment.
1. First, in seeking such information, the school and/or district should note in writing that providing the information is not required and that the requested information will only be used to determine whether the child may be eligible for programs offered in the district that provide enhanced instructional opportunities for immigrant children and youth.
2. Second, the school and/or district should determine whether a student meets the first two criteria of the definition of immigrant child or youth (confirming age and birth outside the United States). In collecting such information, schools and/or districts should pose the same question of all students and ensure that the information is not used to discriminate against students in any way.

3. Finally, only after determining that a student meets the initial criteria for Title III eligibility should the school and/or district then ask questions to determine the total cumulative number of months that the student has attended schools in the United States.

***Key Elements of Successful Programs***
The Minneapolis Foundation suggests the following approaches for working with families and students that have moved to the US.
•      Avoid relying on children as family interpreters
•      Be mindful of body language
•      Be aware that family decision making patterns can vary from patriarch to collaborative with an extended clan
•      Be sensitive to and accepting of religious differences
•      Create a welcoming atmosphere in the school with pictures and artifacts that represent the families in the attendance area
•      Provide translated student handbooks
•      Follow up written materials that are sent home with a phone call or visit to see if there are any questions
•      Offer orientation sessions
•      Give out "welcome videos" done in the family's first language
•      Set up a mentor program for new families
•      Draw upon the strengths of bilingual families and solicit their ideas about how to improve services for families where English is not the first language
•      Partner with other programs and agencies such as family literacy programs
•      Provide in-service and training for school personnel on cultural considerations
•      Vary the day and time of activities
•      Offer on-site ESL classes

## References

Capps, R., Fix, M., Ost, J., Reardon-Anderson, J. & Passel, J. (2004). *The health and well-being of young children of immigrants.*
https://www.urban.org/research/publication/health-and-well-being-young-children-immigrants -

National Association of Social Workers. (2013). Families and Immigration.

National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention. (2011). Strategies to Engaging Immigrant and Refugee Families.

The Minneapolis Foundation. (2010). A New Age of Immigrants. Minneapolis Foundation

## Examples of Resources, Models & Programs

Bridging Refugee Youth & Children Services

Coral Way Elementary School: A Success Story in Bilingualism and Biliteracy
http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/discover/03coral.htm

Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota: Home

MN Department of Education: Section 3113(d) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Title III, Part A, Immigrant Children and Youth is a source of funding to supplement the resources of local school districts in providing quality education to eligible immigrant students. Its purpose is to provide enhanced instructional opportunities to help meet the needs of immigrant children and youth. Retrieved on August 15, 2010: https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/ESEA/t3/imm/

NASW: Child Migrant Protection Toolkit

Serving English language learners in Minnesota (Schools web resources for schools and districts) https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/el/


## Child Protection Services

### *Introduction*
All communities have formal and informal standards for acceptable ways for parents or guardians to raise and discipline children. There are different rules in different parts of the United States and in different parts of the world.  Some parents and guardians do not agree with the legal standards and see Child Protection Services (CPS) as a way for the majority culture to tell them how to raise their children.

### *Rationale*
Parents and guardians need to know that it is their responsibility to discipline their children and teach them right from wrong, but discipline cannot involve injury to children.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*
A report is required whenever abuse is suspected. When a report is made, the county CPS has the responsibility to determine if abuse has occurred and implement a plan. Contact CPS when you have a concern.

### *Key Elements of Successful Programs*
In Minnesota, CPS are provided by the county and the goal is to prevent maltreatment of a child that results in harm or injury including:
• Physical abuse
• Sexual abuse
• Physical neglect
• Emotional abuse and neglect

As professionals or professionals' delegates engaged in the process of education, all school staff is mandated to report suspected child abuse.  By law, reporters remain anonymous. Some schools assign this responsibility to the school social worker. The county may have a maltreatment form that includes the information the county needs to know.  If the child is perceived to be in immediate danger, law enforcement must be called.  If the danger is not perceived to be immediate, the referral is made right away to the county CPS.  If the school employs the alleged perpetrator and the child is a student in the school, the Minnesota Department of Education must be contacted.

CPS county social workers assess the risk to the child based on the reported information and other information they may have about the child and family. If the risk factors meet the state requirements for investigation, CPS will investigate.

## References

Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota
Statewide Office
1821 University Ave, Suite 202-S St. Paul, MN 55104
651 523 0099 phone
651 523 0380 fax
800 621 6322 toll free

Northern Minnesota Office          Southern Minnesota Office
9057 Sunset Strip                  1117 East Main Street
Pequot Lakes, MN 56472             Albert Lea, MN 56007
218 821 6429 phone                 507 377 7665 phone
218 543 6342 fax                   507 377 3101 fax
800 970 6429 toll free             800 813 8713 toll free

Minnesota Department of Human Services Child Welfare Report for April 2004

## Examples of Models, Resources, and Programs

The Abuse Prevention Project: http://pacer.org

Student Maltreatment: mde.student-maltreatment@state.mn.us
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113
Safe Child http://www.safechild.org/index.htm

## Websites

Reporting of Maltreatment to Minors Statute

Minnesota Department of Human Services

Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota

Minnesota Childrenś Alliance

## Community Services

**Child Welfare**

### Introduction

Child welfare services from the county may be offered when families' care of their children does not meet the minimal community standards and children are negatively impacted. Areas of concern for school social workers could be attendance, academic achievement, before
and after school care, death or illness of a family member, lack of heat and/or water in the home, lack of hygiene, homelessness or extremely overcrowded living conditions, dental health, mental health, medical health, domestic violence, substance abuse and/or a need for counseling, mentoring, clothing and food.

### Rationale

School social workers can connect families to culturally appropriate community resources that can help with the above problems or meet with families to help them develop strategies to improve the above situations.  Often these issues occur in families who live in poverty and providing food, clothing and shelter are taking all of the energy and time the parents have.

### Key Elements of Successful Programs

Families do not like help imposed on them without their agreement to the services.  Services must always consider the cultural values of the family.

### References

Minnesota Department of Human Services. (2020, February). *Child welfare report.*
https://mn.gov/dhs/media/fact-sheets/

### Resources

Child protection, foster care, adoption / Minnesota Department of Human Services

Parent Support Outreach / Minnesota Department of Human Services

Family First Prevention Services Act (PDF)


### Juvenile Justice

### Introduction

School social workers have contact with officers of the court and probation officers when juveniles from their school are involved in the juvenile justice system.

### Rationale

School social workers are sometimes called to juvenile court to give information about attendance when truancy is an issue.

### Determining When to Use This Intervention

When a juvenile age 10 to 17 at the time of the offense is apprehended, the case is referred to the juvenile court and is considered a rehabilitative or justice-related case. The juvenile court may be in the juvenile's county of residence or the county where the offense occurred. Law enforcement

officials refer the case to a probation officer or to a county attorney, depending on the county's intake procedure. After intake, if enough evidence exists to prosecute the case, the county attorney files a petition with the juvenile court asking it to make a finding of delinquency. This starts the formal court processing of the case. The court then sets a date for the arraignment, when the youth appears before the court for the first time to answer the charges. If the youth admits to the charges, the court can impose the disposition — the conclusion of a juvenile case by the court and the subsequent consequence — at that time or order a predisposition investigation and set a date for the disposition hearing. If the youth denies the charges, a trial date is set.

### Key Elements of Successful Programs

In Minnesota, the juvenile justice system differs from the adult criminal justice system in several ways, including some of the terminology used.  For example, an adult is arrested by police, charged with a crime, found guilty by a court, sentenced to an adult correctional facility and incarcerated for a specified period of time. A juvenile is apprehended by police, petitioned for an offense, found to have committed an offense by a court and receives a disposition to be placed in a juvenile correctional facility.

Most juvenile court trials are bench trials, where the judge is the sole fact-finder. After the case is heard and if the petition offense is proven, the judge finds the youth to be delinquent and sets a date for the disposition hearing. If the petition is not proven, the judge dismisses the case. At the disposition hearing the judge decides the type of rehabilitation the juvenile will receive.

## References

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention: Home

## Websites

Minnesota Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  Statistics

Redline Version: Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act as Amended by the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018

## Effective Referrals

### Introduction

Providing effective referrals is a cornerstone of good school social work practice.  When school social workers work with students and their families, they generally complete a social history as well as a current needs assessment. Whether the needs assessment is formal or informal, it helps the school social worker understand the stressors of the home environment that may be impacting the student. School social workers must have knowledge about community and school resources that can assist students and families when in need.

### Rationale

Students come to school with a number of stressors from the community, the family and the school setting. For example, homelessness, financial hardship, abuse, trauma, alcoholism and bullying are all stressors that will affect the academic progress of students. A school social worker may be able to help alleviate some of those stressors by providing an effective referral to a school- based or community resource.

### *Determining when to use this intervention*
Providing effective referrals is best utilized when a relationship and trust is developed between the school social workers and the family and student. When both parties are honest and open about acceptable ways to meet needs and if culturally appropriate resources are available, the referral will be successful. This intervention is best used when the needs are discussed and the student and/or family are open to the appropriate resources.

School social workers must also understand that, at times, families or students are not open to receiving help from others outside of their immediate family. Therefore, it is very important that the school social worker talk with the family/student to discuss possibilities and the willingness to accept help. Sometimes outside services are not accepted when first offered but may be an option at another time.

### *Key elements of successful programs*
•        Determining the needs of the student and families is the key to beginning the process
•        Talking to the family and/or student about how they view the problem
•        Understanding the available resources within the school or in the community
•        Offering appropriate suggestions to the family about possible referrals/resources
•        Providing the families with names,  phone numbers, addresses, e-mail, or websites of the resource
•        Perhaps calling ahead to give the receiving resource background information if the family is willing and grants permission
•        Follow up with the family and student to see if further assistance is needed

School social workers always view new students in relationship to their environments.

## Examples of Models, Resources & Programs

Local Native American/Indigenous Resources:
https://mn.gov/ombudfam/resources/#/list/appId/2/filterType/Tag/filterValue/American%20Indian/page/1/sort//order/

Local Native American/Indigenous Resources: MN TRECC - MN TRIBAL RESOURCES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE

Local Hmong Resources: Hmong Community Resources

Local Latino Resources: La Familia Counseling Center | Career Center, Counseling and Support Education and Employment for Youth

Local Latino Resources: CLUES Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio

Local Somali Community Resources: <u>Somali Youth and Family Development Center</u>

Local Somali Community Resources*:* <u>Somali American Parent Association</u>

Other Resources: <u>United Ways of Minnesota | United Way improves lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities to advance the common good.</u>

Other Resources: Office of the Ombudsman for Families <u>Resources / OmbudFam</u>

## Collaboration with Community-Based Services

### *Introduction*
School social workers are educated to function as the link between home, school and community to include mental health agencies, mentors, recreation centers, volunteers etc. Therefore, collaborating with communities is a natural job expectation.  School Social workers work with the "whole child," and collaborating with families and outside agencies that may provide services to the student is a common intervention. This is sometimes called "wraparound service."

### *Rationale*
Adelman and Taylor (2006) state that "comprehensive collaboration is seen as a promising direction for generating essential interventions."  School social workers work at the core
of these interventions by collaborating with teachers, students, families and other outside professionals to develop appropriate interventions that will best serve the student.  Successful community collaborations are also developed to strengthen the neighborhood around the school. If organizations, businesses and other agencies are tied to the school, parents and students will feel tied to the community.

### *Determining When to Use This Intervention*
Collaborating with communities is best used as a supplemental service when students demonstrate additional needs that require outside assistance.  When outside agencies are invited to make donations, refer volunteers, or provide service, schools are able to strengthen their ties to the neighborhood.  This intervention may be used to meet a need that the school is currently lacking such as school supplies, mentors and presentations on specific issues or staff development.

### *Key Elements of Successful Programs*
Key elements of successful collaboration include:
•	Working closely with all the professionals involved with the family and student
•	Reviewing periodically to insure that everyone is working toward the same goals
•	Open communication between all professionals on the team (releases of information will be required)
•	Involving parents in all steps of intervention to ensure consistency
•	Understanding the limitations of the school program by seeking alternative interventions/ community resources when needed

## References

Taylor, L., & Adelman, H. (2006).  Want to work with schools?  What is involved in successful linkages? In C. Franklin, M.B. Harris, & P. Allen-Meares (Eds.), *The school services sourcebook: A guide for school-based professionals*. Oxford University Press.

## Resource Mapping

### Introduction

Resource mapping is a technique utilized by schools and school districts to assess their current resources which include staff, finances, buildings, community partners and work toward filling in the gaps. Mapping provides the "basis for developing a comprehensive, multifaceted and cohesive system" (Adelman & Taylor, 2006). It allows a school to brainstorm possible connections and collaborations within and outside of the school. School social workers are vital during this exercise because of their knowledge of community resources. School social workers also coordinate multiple services for students, therefore, coordinating and integrating existing resources for the school is a natural appointment.

### Rationale

Since schools and school districts are already stretched thin in regards to finances and available resources, resource mapping provides a low-cost and effective way to fill gaps in services over time (Adelman & Taylor, 2006).

### Determining when to use this intervention

Resource mapping can be used at any time by schools.  By identifying needs as well as available resources, schools can begin to fill in gaps where needed.

### Key elements of successful programs

Adelman and Taylor suggest detailing what the school already has and who provides the support. After the self-assessment, list what services and support are needed and decide if it is best met through available school resources.  Following this, collaborate with other community agencies by advertising the needs and determining when additional resources are available in the community and how they may be accessed.

## References

Adelman, H. & Taylor, L. (2006). Mapping a school's resources to improve their use in preventing and ameliorating problems. In C. Franklin, M. B. Harris, & P. Allen-Meares (Eds.), *The school services sourcebook: A guide for school-based professionals*. Oxford University Press.

## Examples of Resources, Models, and Programs

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition: Community Resource Mapping

## Websites

UCLA School Mental Health Project

Resource Mapping and Management to Address Barriers to Learning: An Intervention for Systemic Change

Asset Mapping: Education Northwest | Creating Strong Schools and Communities

Asset Mapping: For Educators: Resource Mapping Strategy — Making Caring Common

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### Assessing Outcomes of School Social Work Practice

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Measuring school social work outcomes involves identifying clear and measurable goals and finding tools and methods to track and measure progress toward those goals.

### Introduction

The National Association of Social Work Code of Ethic (1999) requires that all social workers "monitor and evaluate policies, the implementation of programs, and practice interventions," and "critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice." To ensure best practice social workers need to objectively assess if their interventions are helping, harming or having no impact therefore "evaluating outcomes is essential for problem solving" (Gambrill, 1997, p. 476).

### Rationale

Why measure outcomes?

- It is important for school social workers to measure outcomes for several reasons:
- Ethical practice requires that we "use the most effective and efficient means of helping students overcome academic and socio-emotional barriers to participation in school" (Johnson-Reid, 2007, p. 226). How will you know and how can you show that your intervention was effective if you do not have a reliable (accurate over time) and valid (measures what it was intended to measure) way to measure change?
- Educational funding requires performance data that demonstrates that the money is being well spent. For example, the No Child Left Behind law resulted in schools being denied funding because of poor academic performance. School social workers must be able to clearly document how their services help students to be more successful in school.
- Accountability requires that we "justify the expenditure of public tax dollars on school social work services" especially when school program are being cut due to financial retrenchment (Dupper, 2007, p.213)

### Determining When To Use This Intervention

Outcomes of every intervention should be assessed and recorded. At least once a year, it is helpful to summarize the data on the number of interventions and the effectiveness of these interventions so that this information can be shared with administrators and the general public.

### Key Elements Of Successful Programs

How do I measure outcomes?

An outcome is the change that is desired—The first step is to work with the student, the family, the teachers and any community partners to specifically identify the desired change. The following list provides a few examples of school social work outcomes:
•       Improved attendance
•       Increased parent involvement in student's education
•       Decreased acts of physical or verbal aggression
•       Increased rate of completing school work on time
•       Increased positive interactions with peers
•       Increased positive interactions with faculty and staff
•       Decrease in use of alcohol or drugs
•       Decrease in weapons violations
•       Increase the quality of school work

Measurement—before you implement your intervention you need to get a baseline measurement so you can determine and demonstrate if a change occurs. The baseline measure is a specific measure of what is happening before you start using an intervention. For example, a baseline measure on attendance could be the number of days a student missed school on average over the past week, month or year. Table 1 gives suggestions for ways to obtain possible baseline measures for each of the outcomes listed above. Often it is best to measure specific observable behaviors. However, you can also measure changes in attitude or feelings by asking students, teachers and parents to rate them on a scale of one to ten with one being the negative end of the scale and ten being the positive end of the scale.  For example, you could ask teachers to rate the level of positive interactions a student has with peers (Nelson, 1996). There are also standardized assessments such as the Child Behavior Checklist(Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1981) (available at store.aseba.org) that can be used to assess behavior change over the course of the year.

Measurement—after you implement your intervention you can periodically assess the progress on the outcome.  For example, if a student is working on completing school work on time you could meet with the student at the end of each day or each week and chart the number of assignments that were completed on time. This, of course, means you would need to arrange a simple way for the teachers to let you know how
many assignments the student completed on time such as a daily or weekly log that the student has signed by the teachers.

Seeing progress or lack of progress on a chart can be a powerful motivation for some students.  Some school districts have a contact log that school social workers can
use to record outcome data.  For example, school social workers in the Rochester, Minnesota Public School System use a contact log similar to the following example.

| STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) CONTACT SHEET |
|---|
| Year(s) |

| Learner's Full Name | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parent(s)/Guardian(s) | | | | |
| Type of contact          T=telephone     L=letter        C=conference              H=home visit | | | | |
| Telephone       Home         Work | | | | |
| Date | Contact Person | Type of Contact | Reason | Outcome |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

Monitor and adjust—if after a certain period of time (a week or two) an intervention does not show any positive change in behavior then the intervention needs to be modified.

Who do I share outcomes with?

- Principals—are the most important person with whom to share your outcome data.
- Many schools have site-based management teams that help make decisions about funding and the principal can make sure that your outcome data is shared at those meetings.
- Lead social workers—if you have a lead school social worker in your district or cooperative it is important to share your outcome data with him or her because that person is in generally in the position of dealing with the administration and broader public.
- School Board—work with your building principal to get on the school board agenda to share your outcome data. School board members often are not aware of what school social workers do or how they contribute to the overall mission of the school district.
- Professional conferences—the Social Work Code of Ethics requires that social workers share knowledge with each other and an excellent way to do this is through social work conferences. The Minnesota School Social Workers Association has two conferences
- a year (MSSWA Upcoming Events-Register) Also there is a Midwest school social work conference (Midwest Council School Social Workers) and the School Social Association of America hosts an annual conference (see SSWAA National Conference).

| Table 1 Outcomes and Measurement Indicators | |
|---|---|

| Improved attendance | Average number of days absent in previous month or year<br>Percentage of time the student arrives on time for class<br>Percentage of classes the student attended in previous month |
|---|---|
| Increased parent involvement in student's education | Number of times the parent attends school meetings<br>Number of home visits<br>Number of times parent works with student on homework for 10 minutes<br>Number of times parent talks with school personnel<br>Number of times parent initiates contact with school personnel<br>Number of times parent volunteers at school<br>Number of school activities parent attends |

| Table 1<br>Outcomes and Measurement Indicators | |
|---|---|
| Decreased acts of physical or verbal aggression | Number of times student is reported for acts of aggression<br>Number of times student is sent to the office or support staff for aggression<br>Number of times student is suspended for aggression<br>Number of times the police are called because of student's aggression<br>The self-reported number of times student was upset but did not resort to acts of aggression |
| Increased rate of completing school work on time | The percentage of time the student completes his or her reading (math, social studies, etc) assignments on time |
| Increased positive interactions with peers | The number of times the student initiates friendly interactions with peers during recess or lunch<br>The number of times or the percentage of classes when the student works cooperatively with other during the school day<br>The number of times the teacher observes the student doing something helpful or kind The number of extra curricular activities the student successfully remains in without problems interacting with others |

| | |
|---|---|
| Increased positive interactions with faculty and staff | The number of times the student stays after school to help the teacher<br>The number of times the student greets the faculty or staff in a positive and appropriate manner<br>The number of classes that the student interacts with the faculty and staff in a positive and appropriate manner<br>The number of days a student has without being reported for disrespectful behavior toward school personnel<br>The student's self-rating on a scale regarding how well he or she is relating to school personnel |

| Table 1<br>Outcomes and Measurement Indicators | |
|---|---|
| Decrease in use of alcohol or drugs | Lab tests on blood and urine<br>Student self report of frequency and amount of alcohol or drug use can be obtained with the following assessments available at http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/Social/Module4Screening/Module4.html<br>The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) (Allen, Litten, Fertig, & Babor , 1997) The CAGE assessment<br>The T-ACE The TWEAK |
| Decrease in weapons violations | The number of times the student is reported for bringing weapons to school<br>The number of times the student is reported for talking/emailing/text-messaging about bringing weapons to school |
| Increase the quality of school work | The percentage of correct answers in math assignments<br>The number of errors in writing assignments |

## References

Allen, J. P., Litten, R. Z., Fertig, J. B., & Babor, T. (1997) A review of research on the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT). *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 21, 613-619.

Dupper, D. (2007). Incorporating Best Practices. In L. Bye and M. Alvarez (Eds.), *School social work: Theory to practice* (pp.212-222). Thomson/Brooks/Cole.

Gambrill, E. (1997). *Social work practice: A critical thinker's guide*. Oxford.

Johnson-Reid, M. (2007). Research and evaluation of school social work. In L. Bye and M.

Alvarez (Eds.), *School social work: Theory to practice* (pp. 225-244). Thomson/Brooks/Cole.

Nelson, J. (1996). Teaching students to evaluate practice outcomes by monitoring clients' responses to opportunities. *Journal of Social Work Education, 32*(2), 181-189.

Achenbach, T. M., & Edelbrock, C. S. (1981). Behavioral problems and competencies reported by parents of normal and disturbed children aged 4-16. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 46 (Serial Number 188).