The Goals of the International Network

To provide:
- Information about school social work around the world
- Links between school social work associations

Archive of the Electronic Newsletter
The newsletter of the International Network for School Social Work is sent electronically to an increasing number of school social workers and school social work associations around the world. The newsletter provides information about the progress of school social work around the world and publishes brief practice articles that illustrate current trends in school social work.

You are free to copy and share this document providing you:
- Attribute the document and its contents to the International Network for School Social Work, Coordinator Marion Huxtable
- Do not alter or add to the document
- Do not use the document for commercial purposes

Marion Huxtable
Electronic Newsletter January 2012
Editor: Marion Huxtable

Water Cooler Conversations: Salaries and Working conditions

When colleagues gather around the water cooler the conversation is apt to turn to salary, working conditions and benefits. There may also be complaints of lack of administrative support, feelings of powerlessness and loss of job satisfaction. When social workers do not feel that they are recognized as an important part of the life of the school, or that their ideas are welcomed or that their work is making a difference in children’s lives they may show signs of burnout or talk of quitting. While these are common issues amongst school social workers all over the world, the problems are highlighted by recent reports from Hong Kong and Kurdistan.

Woes blamed as school social workers quit (The Standard Wednesday, September 14, 2011)

Low salaries, lack of support, poor prospects for promotion and lack of job satisfaction prompted a third of social workers at elementary schools in Hong Kong to quit in 2010. Apparently they are hired on one-year contracts by the private agencies who have to bid each year to provide student guidance services, so there is little job security.

School social workers assigned other tasks (The Kurdish Globe, January 14, 2012)

The Kurdish Globe recently reported that social workers hired to help primary and secondary school students with social and personal difficulties are prevented from fulfilling this role by being assigned clerical work and other inappropriate duties. Although frustrated by this, the social workers have the backing of their professional association, and the Education Directorate has issued regulations that specify the responsibilities of the school social workers in providing students the help they need.

What causes stress for school social workers?

School social workers may have heavy caseloads, difficult work and low pay, but it is often not the work or poor compensation that produce stress. People tend to go into social work wanting this kind of challenge and knowing that the salary is not as high as in some other professions. However if they do not feel they have a voice in establishing working conditions, if they see unfair personnel decisions, or if they experience discrimination or harassment at work, workers may lose their enthusiasm, develop symptoms of stress or become burned out. Then there is likely to be a high rate of quitting due to stress, and the turnover of staff results in clients being assigned to new staff with less experience. When stressed or burned-out workers stay in the profession the quality of service suffers.
Salary Issues

Social workers know that their profession has never been highly paid. People tend to choose social work from a sense of mission rather than with a goal of achieving a high level of compensation. However, the relatively low salary along with other stresses may in time produce a feeling of being under-valued. Social workers have a commitment to equity, so are likely to become dissatisfied if the salary scale does not reward their educational level, length of service, experience and responsibilities, if pay lags behind inflation or female staff are paid less.

Representation for school social workers

Professional associations can help in many ways. In countries, such as Sweden and the US, with well-established school social work programs, strong specialty professional associations provide much-needed advocacy. Experience shows that lobbying to protect the social work role and avoid cuts in service is never-ending. The professional association is the means to communicate effectively with decision makers from the Ministry or Department of Education at both local and national levels. As the School Social Work Association of America has done, professional associations can join together with other associations representing school nurses, psychologists and counselors for greater impact in communicating about the need for children to have support at school. The association can help school social workers achieve improved job satisfaction by developing the job description (as was done in Mongolia), by defining professional standards and offering continuing education.

However helpful professional associations are in advocating for school social work jobs, they may be unable to help the worker with a grievance stemming from violation of workplace rights, so many school social workers turn to a union for such help. In the US, many school social workers belong to teachers’ unions for help with grievances, as well as for negotiating salaries and working conditions. UNISON (a public service trade union representing 40,000 social workers) in the UK provides workplace help and lobbies for members. The 23,000-member Norwegian Union of Social Educators and Social Workers (Fellesorganisasjonen for Barnevernpedagoger, Sosionomer og Vernepleiere) combines a wide range of functions of both a professional association and a union for the 430 members who work in schools. Collective bargaining by these unions allows a collective voice for fair pay and working conditions.

Strikes and other work actions – know the issues before it happens

When collective bargaining breaks down, unions representing public employees including teachers and other school personnel may call for a strike. For example, on November 30, 2011 most schools in the UK were closed by a strike and social workers went out along with teachers. Social workers have little experience with strikes or guidance for conduct in such a situation. Since it is important to know the professional issues before it happens, social workers should consult general statements from sources such as the NASW Code of Ethics:

3.10 Labor-Management Disputes
(a) Social workers may engage in organized action, including the formation of and participation in labor unions, to improve services to clients and working conditions.
(b) The actions of social workers who are involved in labor-management disputes, job actions, or labor strikes should be guided by the profession’s values, ethical principles, and ethical standards. Reasonable differences of opinion exist among social workers concerning their primary obligation as professionals during an actual or threatened labor strike or job action. Social workers should carefully examine relevant issues and their possible impact on clients before deciding on a course of action. http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp
ERIC/CASS
Educational Resources Information Center/Counseling and Student Services

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a US federally funded program started in 1966 to serve as the archive of important documents related to education. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services (ERIC/CASS) provides a database specifically for professionals who provide student services. In 1994 a group of representatives from the National Association of Social Workers (including Isadora Hare, then the NASW senior staff associate for school social work) met with ERIC/CASS staff and opened the way for school social work documents to be part of the ERIC/CASS database.

ERIC is the world’s largest and most used archive for articles and other documents related to education. It is an easy-to-use virtual library that is available to anyone online. It provides access to:

- Documents such as research reports, curriculum guides, theses and conference papers that may not be published elsewhere
- Articles from over 900 education journals from around the world

ERIC also makes it possible to submit reports or other products, even documents that are not published in peer reviewed journals. Once your report is in the ERIC collection it remains available to all indefinitely. Since it is easy to submit documents to ERIC, it is possible to make information about school social work in all countries available.

So, consider sending your research reports, book reviews, curricula, bibliographies, theses, conference papers, translations and articles to ERIC at http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/resources/html/submission/content_providers_c_overview.html. A translation is required if the document is not in English.

As an example of how the online library makes school social work information available to a worldwide readership, read the Spring 2002 International Issue of the Journal of School Social Work, the first international issue of a school social work journal. The reviewers were from Australia, Finland, Ghana, Japan, Sweden and the US. This journal was published by the Iowa School Social Workers Association, so the international issue was probably read by a handful of people in the US and hardly anybody outside the US. The entire issue is freely available on ERIC on pages 130 to 236 at http://www.eric.ed.gov:80/PDFS/ED467859.pdf. Even if all the paper copies of the
journal issue were to disappear, it would still be available online to anyone, anywhere, at any time. Below is a Table of Contents for this ten-year-old journal issue. Allow up to four minutes for the pdf to load and read articles from Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and North America. These articles give perspective on what has changed in the last turbulent decade and on issues that still challenge school social workers.

**International Issue of the Journal of School Social Work**  
**Volume 12. #2 Spring 2002**

**Contents**

**Editorial**
*Marion Huxtable*

**Articles**
8. Content, Experience and Dilemmas of School Social Work: A Message from Slovakia  
*Vladimir Labath and Boris Siroky*

*Matthias Drilling and Dorothea Gautschin*

35. A Pilot Project for School Social Work in Korea  
*Han In Young and Kim Min Jung*

47. The Impact of Family Structure and Family Function Factors on the Deviant Behaviors of High School Students in Mecca City, Saudi Arabia  
*Mohammed M. Al-Garni*

62. School Social Work in International Context: Two Colleagues Learn from Each Other  
*Marianne Pennekamp and Heidi Pörschke*

71. Community Networking for School-Age Children: The Glades Collaborative Internship Project  
*Sharon Singleton*

83. Corporal Punishment in Schools in Ghana: A Social Concern  
*Marie-Antoinette Sossou*

**Book Reviews**

98. Zlata’s Diary by *Zlata Filipovic*. Reviewed by *Dea Ellen Epley Birtwistle*

**Looking over my Shoulder**  
*Marion Huxtable*

_Journal of School Social Work, Volume11 #1 Fall 2000, Page 33 to page 40_  

It is not often that we have the chance to read about the frustrations and satisfactions of a life in school social work. You may catch your own reflection as you look over the shoulder of a school social worker whose life work was down at eye level with children. It was satisfying to be asked to write this article for people like you who understand what it is like to work on keeping children in school, defending their rights and helping them to reach their potential.
Electronic Newsletter March 2012
Editor: Marion Huxtable

Where social workers are needed in schools around the Pacific Rim
New Zealand, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, Laos, Cambodia

Stress, dropout rates, suicides, bullying and child abuse are motivating a demand for school social work in countries around the Pacific Rim. Publicity about shocking cases of child abuse, violence, suicides and bullying are driving the trend.

For example a child abuse case in New Zealand (in which a mother was sentenced to seven and a half years in prison for starving and abusing her nine year old daughter) was quickly followed by calls for social workers to be made available in every New Zealand school (http://tvnz.co.nz/politics-news/call-cross-party-response-horrific-abuse-4666801).

In Vietnam experts find that increasing rates of school violence, dropping out and suicide have added urgency to the need for social workers to be a regular part of the educational system. The Ministry of Education and Training has proposed a major, well-funded plan for teaching life skills. Participants at a social work conference in Ho Chi Minh City believe that this is a task for social workers rather than teachers who are already overloaded with responsibilities. Le Chi An (head of HCM City Open University's Social Work faculty), speaking of current short-term school social work pilot projects, said that the work done by social workers should go beyond providing counseling to address other problems students face on a regular basis. Conference participants want social workers who are now being trained at about 34 universities to be part of a school’s staff in order to be able to carry out this work professionally and effectively (http://vietnamnews.vnagency.com.vn/social-issues/212239/violence-suicides-prompt-call-for-social-workers-in-schools.html).

In 2011 the Government of Hong Kong increased funding for school social work services in secondary schools. A 20% increase in school social work staff is intended to provide more activities and guidance programs as well as more counseling for students with personal problems. Societal concerns about youth problems such as designer drugs, gangs and compensated dating prompted this expanded effort to help youth through both preventive and remedial school-based services by the NGO’s that provide the school social work service (http://7thspace.com/headlines/395253/additional_funding_of_50_million_to_enhance_school_social_work_services.html).

In Korea the suicide of 2 teenagers who said they were victims of school bullies spurred national discussion about how to deal with bullying in the schools. The phenomenon of wangtta in which a class collectively ostracizes a student is a related issue. The Government’s
response is to provide police protection of the victim and police supervision of the bully. This approach fails to deal with the underlying dynamics of scapegoating and prejudice, and has the potential to make it more difficult for timid and terrorized victims to ask for help. An approach that deals with the fundamental factors would be a school-wide effort that requires all students, faculty, families and staff to examine how the school culture promotes victimization. Stakeholders could then jointly design a plan to create a school culture that encourages acceptance while deterring bullying (http://www.aljazeera.com/video/asia-pacific/2012/02/2012258444415454.html).

School Social Work in Malaysia: Challenges and Prospects, an article by Zulkarnain A. Hatta of the Universiti Sains Malaysia calls for the introduction of school social work. Focusing on school violence and bullying, Hatta states that teachers, parents and counselors cannot handle the increasingly difficult problems faced by schools in Malaysia. These problems create an urgent need for professionally trained school social workers who understand the social ills of the community. He describes recent shocking incidents of violence in schools, as well as problems of youth gangs, sexual promiscuity, drug abuse, absenteeism and dropouts, and points out that disciplinary measures are inadequate to solve the problems that appear to be related to rapid change in the traditional Malaysian lifestyle (http://eprints.usm.my/20675/1/SCHOOL_SOCIAL_WORK_IN_MALAYSIA_CHALLENGES_AND_PROSPECTS.pdf).

In Laos an experienced Vietnamese social worker, Xuyen Dangers, has created a unique social work program for school children in five villages through the Donkoi Children Development Center. Within a framework of traditional crafts and cultural activities such as music, she provides prevention programs, advocacy and social services using professional social work skills. She works with the schools, the village office, parents and community, focusing on the poorest, most disadvantaged children to protect their rights and develop their potential, interests and talents. Xuyen is also working towards developing professional social work training at the National University of Laos.

In 2006 the Cambodian Government estimated that 30,000 children were sexually exploited, often by tourists from the developed world. A model program such as Donkoi Children Development Center in Laos providing culturally sensitive social work services could provide the hope for children in neighboring Cambodia to escape poverty, trafficking and sexual slavery as described in a recent Vancouver Sun lead article (http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/gaming/tourists+invade+Cambodia/6354851/story.html, http://www.vancouversun.com/news/Putting+price+childhood/6354173/story.html).

School social work at its best uses a systems approach to develop a combination of prevention programs and early intervention to help the school community create a child-friendly environment that accepts all children. School systems everywhere embrace the goal of developing the child’s full potential and protecting child rights. The school social worker’s role is to work with all members of the school community to examine these lofty goals and ensure they are part of the school culture in practice. By turning the goals into measurable objectives and actions, teams of teachers, school staff, parents, school social workers, administrators and community leaders can develop a child-friendly school culture and activities that reduce all the problems mentioned here.
The school Social Work Association of Ghana, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, The Department of Ghana, Legon, and the Education at the University of the theme ENSURING FOR ALL THE WORLD’S International School Social April 10-13 in Accra, Ghana. Zimbabwe, South Africa, Malaysia and South Korea goal of quality education for all children shared by school social workers around the world.

Government urged to attach social workers to schools

Government has been called upon to make social work an integral part of the education system in an effort to improve upon students’ academic performances. This is because, the social worker has been trained to help identify students or people with psycho-social issues, such as learning disabilities, poor performances, absenteeism, bullying and others.

Speaking at the opening of the fifth International School Social Work conference held in Accra on Tuesday, Mrs. Esther Mahama, President, School Social Work Association of Ghana, urged government to endeavour to consult social workers in the drawing of curriculum in the schools for their inputs. “Social workers are supposed to be staff of our schools so that, as the teacher teaches, the social worker would handle other psycho-social issues faced by the students”, she added. She expressed concern about the unavailability of jobs for students of social work, which caused them to seek job opportunities in other sectors.

Nowadays due to limited social work institutions, trained social workers are compelled to seek job opportunities from organizations such as the banks and telecommunication companies.

The three day conference, which was on the theme ”Ensuring Quality Education for All the World’s Children,” was attended by over 170 social workers from countries such as India, South Korea, United Kingdom and Nigeria.
Dr. Kofi Ohene Konadu, Lecturer, Faculty of Social Work, University of Ghana, appealed to government to extend the needed assistance to the profession for the country to derive the maximum benefits. “We do not see the works of social workers because we do not have social institutions in the country for our graduates”.

International Delegates Business Meeting

During the International Conference participants from Mongolia, United States, Ghana, Finland, Nigeria, Canada, & South Africa met to discuss options for future international conferences and how to strengthen international communication between school social workers and their national associations.

The Mongolian delegation presented a case for holding the 6th international conference in Mongolia and the group approved the proposal unanimously. This will be held in 2015 and the theme will be CREATING CHILD FRIENDLY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AROUND THE WORLD.

Munkhjargal Bujgar, MSW, President of the Mongolian Association of School Social Workers, shared the association’s plans to make this conference a benefit especially for surrounding countries, as well as for the whole international community of school social workers. They will work closely with the University, the Government and with Asian countries where they already have good connections to make this a success.

Possibilities for developing stronger international connections between school social workers were next discussed including the possibility of a stronger connection with the International Federation of Social Workers and expanding awareness of school social work.


If you would like the archive of the International Network’s newsletters from 2006 through 2012, send me an email at mhuxtable@olympus.net. The file is 9.2 MB.
An Opportunity to Develop an International School Social Work Credential
Michelle Alvarez

As you may remember, I sent out a survey in November 2011 about interest in online coursework in the field of school social work. The response was very good and as a result I was contacted by several countries to talk further about how to collaborate on the development of school social work courses around the world.

From these discussions came the idea proposed by the Singapore Association of Social Workers (School Social Work Chapter) and the Students Care Service - Centre of Specialization for School Social Work in Singapore. They envision the development of a school social work credential that would be recognized by international partners and by countries just beginning to develop school social work services. For example, a person wanting to become a school social worker would complete coursework (offered at several universities around the world) that includes assignments specific to the country of the course participant. On passing the course, participants will receive a certificate of completion that would be recognized by their country. Should the participant later wish to practice school social work in a partner country, the participant can take “booster” modules to ensure understanding of the socio-cultural practice context of the partner country and receives a certificate that allows him to sit for licensing exams or work as a school social worker in that partner country.

Developing a credential such as this will take representation from many countries and universities. The School Social Work Association of America, the Singapore Association of Social Workers (SSW Chapter) and Students Care Service will partner with any representatives interested in pursuing the development of an International School Social Work Credential. Meetings will be held through an electronic platform such as Skype or Adobe Connect. Meeting times will be coordinated with all time zones involved and participants will have choices for meeting times. It is hoped that a team will be begin to work by July 2012 on this project.

If you are interested in being on the development committee, please email Dr. Michelle Alvarez, malvarez@mnsu.edu.
School Social Workers Vital to School Success in Tasmania
Nick McKim, MP Feb 1, 2012

School social workers play an integral role in assisting students to be the best they can be, the Minister for Education & Skills Nick McKim, said today.

Officially opening the 2012 School Social Worker Conference, Mr. McKim said social workers were vital in supporting students by bringing schools and families together.

“We want every student in our public education system to have the opportunity to achieve their potential in an environment where they feel safe, supported and happy,” Mr. McKim said. “Social workers, carers, families and communities all have an important role.” Mr. McKim said that the mental and emotional wellbeing of students was linked to learning participation and achievement and enabled successful educational pathways.

“Education must be tailored to the individual needs of each student, with their health and wellbeing considered as integral factors to their learning. School social workers are vital in supporting schools to provide happy, healthy and safe environments where students are equipped to reach their potential. They are responsible for mentoring, assisting and guiding our students, and contribute to the achievement of outcomes in Tasmanian education.” The professional learning forum is an opportunity for Department of Education school social workers to network with colleagues from around the state, discuss relevant issues affecting schools and communities, update knowledge and listen to dynamic guest speakers.

School Social Work is Growing in Tasmania
April 27, 2012

The Minister for Education and Skills, Nick McKim, said six new school social workers, totaling 3.9 FTE, would begin work in Southern Tasmania within the next week. Mr. McKim said that he recognized that school social workers were a very important part of supporting students.

“Every school should have access to a social worker and the Department of Education has been working to recruit new employees to fill vacancies in the south”, Mr. McKim said.

“They are very specialized positions and I am pleased that six new social workers will begin work within the week.”
Snapshots of School Social Work Practice in the US

Many versions of school social work practice have been based on a western model, often the US model. There is much to learn from practice in the US, where school social work has a long history, is widely accepted in the school system and is relatively well organized. At its best, US school social work implements the core values of social work including protection of human rights and social justice, advocacy for inclusion, respect, caring and compassion.

This issue of the newsletter showcases the practice of school social work in the US. It presents an opportunity for readers to consider how this model fits different societies with varied cultures, local agendas and bureaucratic demands, and how different interpretations may be needed in different contexts. However school social work is interpreted, it is essential in every country for making education accessible to all. School children and youth everywhere present similar problems (disabilities, poverty, marginalization, emotional problems and family stress). They have the same rights in every country (respect for their views, protection from violence, the right to health and education and the right to know about their rights). Read the attached news article and view 3 videos to get a snapshot of the variety of ways US school social workers meet students’ needs and defend their rights.

A School Social Worker who Speaks Kids' Language


Reported in Indystar.com, February 4, 2012

Boushehry, a social worker at a middle school in Indiana, sees as many as 35 students a day bringing with them a steady stream of pain and trouble covering every adolescent issue, from students who need tutoring, students grieving from the loss of siblings or of parents, students who may be victims of abuse or neglect, students who harm themselves, miss school, are disruptive or withdrawn. They are described as weighed down “by more than a backpack”. The article describes Boushehry’s own history and some of the daily dilemmas of a typical school social worker, including a summary of his attempts to help a 14 year-old girl with a marijuana habit, cuts on her arm and a frightening story of suicidal thoughts on New Year’s Eve, a situation with a host of challenges.
A Specialized Role with Emotionally Disabled Students
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZH6urr-Jw&feature=related

In this 3-minute video school social worker Marie Armantrout speaks about her specialized job in 12 Florida middle schools working in classrooms with emotionally disabled students.

Day in the Life of a School Social Worker
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ggsz7qtPcoY

This 8-minute video features Tauchiana Vanderbilt, MSW '05, a young school social worker in North Carolina. She describes her passion for encouraging children and her commitment to working as a partner with families and the school to solve school problems. Her manner shows the value she places on working with strengths, empowering families, and partnering with teachers with respect, trust and caring. The video has insights into the resources that Tauchiana has such as a well-equipped office and a supportive School Principal.

School Social Work – What is it really like?
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8S_IrBjOjtg&feature=related

In this 3-minute video Sue Smith, a school social worker in Iowa, introduces colleagues who describe the rewards and challenges in their work. Their comments show some of the highlights of being a school social worker in the US.

• The variety offered by working with both the school system and the child
• The holistic approach of working with a child, family, school and community agencies
• The opportunity to work with students with disabilities such as autism
• Working on system-wide change
• Working with the most difficult children
• Working as a mediator with teachers and administrators

Some of these Iowa school social workers work for the Iowa Area Education Agencies, a division of the school system providing services for students with special needs. A video http://www.iowapartnersineducation.org/ shows professionals from different disciplines providing services and resources to both struggling students and the entire school population through the AEA, plus feedback from a student and parent who received service.

The Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) has recently graduated its first class of 22 social work students in the first college-level social work course in Cambodia. http://www.phnompenhpost.com/index.php/2012062556984/Lifestyle/cambodias-social-work-grads.html
40 organizations including local, international and overseas agencies joined in a partnership to make this possible. One of these partnerships involves technical assistance from the School of Social Work at the University of Washington http://socialwork.uw.edu/programs/global-reach/building-human-capacity.
Electronic Newsletter July 2012
Editor: Marion Huxtable

The International Conferences of the International Network for School Social Work

The International School Social Work Conference held in Ghana this year completed the cycle of a conference in each continent. The 5 conferences have increased communication between school social workers around the world, strengthened practice in each region and enhanced the standing of the profession in the host country. The conferences took place in:

- 1999 in the US, hosted by the School Social Work Association of America
- 2003 in Sweden, hosted by the Swedish School Social Workers Association
- 2006 in Korea, hosted by the Korea Association of School Social Work
- 2009 in New Zealand, hosted by the school social workers of Aotearoa
- 2012 in Ghana hosted, by the School Social Work Association of Ghana


The School Social Work Association of Ghana, in partnership with the International Network for School Social Work, hosted the 5th International School Social Work Conference in Accra, Ghana. The theme was “School Social Work: Ensuring Quality Education for all the World’s Children”. The conference was a huge success with over 200 participants from 14 countries attending. Conference activities and workshops provided a stimulating atmosphere for exchange of ideas and experiences in school social work practices around the globe featuring speakers from 11 countries.

The event was organized and sponsored by SSWAG with the crucial support and collaboration of the Department of Social Work, University of Ghana, Legon, and the Department of Special Education, University of Education, Winneba, under the distinguished auspices of the Ministry of Education.

It was so gratifying to hear and see delegates from 14 countries representing all the continents of the World being acknowledged as they stood up to be introduced. As the President of SSWAG and conference chair, organizing, coordinating and participating in the 5th International Conference on “Ensuring Quality Education for all the World’s Children” was the most exciting period of my life. In reality, spending four days with social workers, educators, students, service organizations, government representatives, researchers, policy
makers, and experts in the field of social work from around the globe was a stimulating and motivating professional experience. The level of commitment, humour, talents and passion exhibited during the plenary and breakout sessions was overwhelming. The drive to work together to achieve personal and conference objectives was enormous. Keynote speeches and workshops formed the basis of presentations and discussions, creating an interactive atmosphere for exchange of ideas and knowledge for school social work practices. Among social events, a Ghanaian Cultural Troup showcased a series of splendid traditional dances that moved participants to the dancing floor. A hotel resident band also entertained delegates to famous Ghanaian Highlife music that kept delegates dancing to the late hours of the night.

The Minister for Women and Children Affairs and Ghana’s Deputy Minister of Education, Honorable Mahama Ayariga, who delivered a speech on behalf of the first lady of Ghana (the conference Guest of Honour), were among several distinguished plenary speakers. The Minister of Education used the opportunity to interact with conference participants and also participated in two workshop presentations. He left the conference site with informed knowledge about school social work. At his suggestion we have submitted a paper on conference outcomes and recommendations to the Ministry of Education for consideration.

Throughout the conference, seasoned members of the social work profession kept talking about the need to have school social workers in all school settings. The challenge to school social work associations, social work training institutions and employers is to ensure that enough personnel are effectively trained and placed in school settings, particularly in Ghana and other African Countries where the profession is not well developed.

The conference established a platform for SSWAG and social work training institutions to collaborate and produce information to increase administrators’ understanding of the role of school social workers in education systems. It also set an agenda for SSWAG to advocate for and initiate programmes that will attract support from the Education Ministry, other sectors and donors.

The delegates at the Accra conference unanimously approved holding the next international school social work conference in Mongolia. The strong School Social Work Association of Mongolia will organize the conference with support from the University, the Ministry of Education and an international committee.
Curacao became part of the Caribbean Dutch Kingdom, following the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles in 2010. Population is 142,180. The main language spoken is Papiamentu. Dutch is the language spoken mostly in the schools. School social workers have the BSW degree and have been working in the schools since 1985. There are now 15 school social workers, each covering ten schools. They are employed by the school system, providing a full range of social work services on request of the school, teacher or school principal. Information from Ruckly Ettienne.

School Social Work in Trinidad and Tobago

Population is 1.3 million. English is the country's official language and two English-based creole languages (Trinididian Creole or Tobagonian Creole) are spoken. Initially persons with a degree in the Social Sciences (BSc in psychology, sociology, behavioural science as well as social work) were employed as school social workers. There has been a revision of the employment policy recently however to give preference to persons with degrees in social work over other qualifications. School social workers are employed by the Student Support Services Division of the Ministry of Education. School social work service began in 2004. There are currently 45 people employed as school social workers providing the full range of services. Prior to this date students received social work intervention from social workers based in the Ministry of Social Development. Information from Mary Bastien.
School Social Work in South Africa

Population estimate is 48,810,427. School social workers are employed in South Africa by the Provincial Education departments or directly by the school through the School Governing Body. They hold a degree in Social Work and are registered with the Professional Council of Social Work. The Research Monograph Exploring the Viability of School-Based Support for Vulnerable Children (see below) reports that the shortage of social workers available to schools means that teachers are left trying to carry out the social work role of providing care.

Information from Carola Petersen.

Exploring the Viability of School-Based Support for Vulnerable Children

A Case Study of Two Township schools in Johannesburg


The research on which this paper is based was commissioned by the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE http://www.create-rpc.org). CREATE is funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) for the benefit of developing countries and is coordinated from the Centre for International Education, University of Sussex.

This case study of a primary and a secondary school in a Johannesburg township was designed to evaluate the feasibility of the South African Department of Education’s plan to create “caring schools” for township schools with limited resources. The goal of the caring schools movement is to transform schools into sites for children’s services with health promotion, care for orphans, social services and psychosocial support for vulnerable children.

The study was done starting with a literature review of models for providing care through schools, followed by surveys, interviews with teachers individually and in groups and observations. The two schools selected had a high proportion of vulnerable children, few resources and large class size (45 to 60 children per class). Vulnerable children included children who are orphaned, neglected, abused, affected by poverty or disabled.

The study found that teachers supported the concept of turning schools into caring communities, but they doubted that it is feasible to fulfill such a function with the present level of resources and the tremendous needs of the children. They cited excessive class size, lack of training, poor funding, shortage of social workers, lack of community support, and inadequate Government support to make it a reality. Even the feeding program is under-funded and does not reach all the children or make it possible to feed them every day.

The burden of caring falls on the teachers, already burdened by over-crowded classes and poor salaries. They find themselves trying to provide counseling, liaison with the homes, even providing food for hungry children. Many teachers feel the strain of trying to both teach and fulfill the caring function without adequate support.

The research demonstrates that many components are needed to turn the school into a center of caring services for children. School social workers are one necessary part of a system that must be adequately funded and supported to meet the needs of vulnerable learners.
Schulsozialarbeit in Austria

Population 8,418,000. Currently there is increased interest in advancing and expanding school social work in Austria. A study by Michaela Adamowitsch for Ludwig Boltzmann Institute Health Promotion Research collected information for the school year 2010/2011 to create a baseline of school social work in Austria. The study included 24 school social work programs with at least one from each of Austria’s 9 Federal States. It involved an online questionnaire for 131 school social workers at 256 schools. The results provide a basis for developing guidelines for implementing school social work throughout Austria. There are various models of employment: By the school board in Vienna, through the child and youth service agency in Upper Austria and by private agencies. The school social workers offer casework and groupwork, preventive activities and consultations with teachers. Reducing early school-leaving and interventions with pupils who have emotional and behavioral problems are some of the main concerns. Most of the practitioners are certified social workers and a few have a background in social pedagogy or educational sciences.

Reference

Social Workers in Norway’s Schools

Population of Norway 5,033,675. Social workers are well represented in Norway’s schools with a variety of job titles including Miljøterapeut (social environment therapist), Miljøarbeider (social environment worker), Vernepleier (social educator), Barnevernpedagog (child welfare worker), Sosionom (social worker), Sosiallærer (social teacher) and Sosialkurator (social caseworker). Social workers have been a part of the Norwegian school system since the 1950’s. Then they were employed in special schools for children and youth with behavioural problems or physical and mentally handicaps. Inside of these institutions they were responsible for care, upbringing and education. Such schools no longer exist, and since the early 1990’s
children in need of extra care have been integrated into the ordinary school system. The school system in Norway has changed a great deal the last 30 years. From having a strict school policy based on discipline, and a view that the school system’s role was only educational, today the school system also has been given a role in reducing social differences. An important task is that all children and youth are included in the regular school system, and are offered education that is adjusted to their capabilities. Thus there is a need for other professions apart from the teachers. Unfortunately this has not been formalised, but because some schools and communities have been aware of the value of employing social workers, we now find them in the school system. This has happened in the last 10-15 years.

They have various tasks in the school system. Mainly the social workers work with individuals at risk and their families, and with groups of children. An important part of the work is also to establish and work on good relations between pupils, their families, teachers and services outside of the school, such as psychiatric services, child welfare services and social services.

In Norway, employing social workers in schools is not compulsory. To expand the number of social workers in the school system is a task for the Union. The social workers are represented by the Norwegian Union of Social Educators and Social Workers Fellesorganisasjonen for Barnevernspedagoger, Sosionomer og Verneverpleiere (FO) www.fo.no. The FO functions as both a Professional Association and a Trade Union, conducting wage negotiations and work-place activities, lobbying on matters concerning social policy and activities to promote professional social work and education. Ethics is fundamental in social work and ethics issues are high on FO’s agenda. Information from Ellen Galaasen.

**School Social Work International Collaboration**  
Leticia Villarreal Sosa

On Friday, September 28th the School Social Work Committee on International Collaboration had its inaugural meeting. The School Social Work Association of America is facilitating the committee and it will be co-chaired by Leticia Villarreal Sosa, Assistant Professor at Dominican University in River Forest, IL, and Mei Ling Tan-Wu, Chair of the School Social Work Chapter of the Singapore Association of Social Workers. The Committee is comprised of both school social work practitioners and social work professors and has a long-term goal to establish an online school social work training program. Social workers and professors from Japan, Korea, Sri Lanka, Austria, Singapore, Scotland, and the United States participated in the first meeting. The committee discussed school social work training and standards in the respective countries. The committee hopes to create a network that will lead to international collaboration and sharing of resources such as the exchange of syllabi and opportunities for shared training and professional development.

For the next meeting we are asking that members send existing syllabi and competencies to the committee chairs. From this information, we will begin to identity common competencies and an understanding of necessary adaptations for local needs. The next meeting will take place on Friday October 26th. If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact committee co-chairs Leticia Villarreal Sosa at lvillarreal@dom.edu or Mei Ling Tan-Wu at tan.wu.meiling@gmail.com.
School Social Work and Educational Equity for Girls

The mission of school social work is to achieve quality education for all. Both girls and boys have their troubles in school, and school social workers must focus on the obstacles faced by all children and youth. Today we focus on the special needs of girls, looking at UNESCO’s Education for All, Goal 5 - Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality. This suggests a key role for school social workers in countries where girls have many barriers to schooling including poverty, unsafe conditions, cultural bias, gender stereotypes, low status of females, lack of female role models, lack of toilets, lack of feminine hygiene products, early marriage, pregnancy and many more issues related to being a girl. Eliminating gender disparity and ensuring girls’ success from pre-school to college requires all the skills in the social worker’s toolbox.

Highlights on Gender Equity from UNESCO’s Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching the Marginalized

- The share of girls out of school has declined from 58% to 54%, and the gender gap in primary education is narrowing in many countries. P. 1.
- The number of children not in school has been falling, gender gaps are narrowing and more children are completing a basic education. P. 19.
- Gender barriers remain intact. There has been progress towards greater gender parity in school enrolment. Even so, being born a girl carries with it a significant education disadvantage in many countries. That disadvantage is reflected in the fact that girls still account for 54% of the out-of-school population. Moreover, out-of-school girls are far more likely than boys never to go to school. In twenty-eight countries, there are fewer than nine girls in primary school for every ten boys. Poverty further reinforces gender disparity. P. 54.
- Gender parity would cut the number of girls out of school by over 6 million. Gender
disadvantage is most pronounced in the Arab States, Central Asia, and South and West Asia. In Pakistan, girls accounted for 60% of out-of-school children in 2006. P. 58.

- There are currently some 759 million illiterate youths and adults in the world. Reflecting the legacy of gender disparities in education, two-thirds of this number are women. P. 7.

- Gender, poverty, language and culture often combine to produce an extremely heightened risk of being left far behind. In Turkey, 43% of Kurdish-speaking girls from the poorest households have fewer than two years of education, while the national average is 6%; in Nigeria, some 97% of poor Hausa-speaking girls have fewer than 2 years of education. P. 9.

- With some of the world’s largest gender gaps, several countries in West Africa have adopted policies aimed at strengthening parity as part of the wider strategy for achieving universal primary education. Some of these policies focus on removing one of the greatest obstacles to gender equity: attitudes on girls’ and women’s place in society. Working through village heads and religious leaders, governments have mounted campaigns to communicate to parents the importance of educating daughters. Other strategies include paying financial incentives, providing water and sanitation in schools (including separate latrines for boys and girls), recruiting female teachers and providing incentives for their deployment to rural areas, and giving teachers gender sensitization training (UNESCO-IIEP, 2009). In remote rural areas, distance to school is often a major security concern for parents of young girls. Governments have responded by attempting to bring classrooms closer to communities, often by building satellite schools. P. 66.

**UNESCO Announces eAtlas of Gender Equality in Education**

(This eAtlas document is too large to download easily. However, it is easy to build your own statistical tables for education indicators in more than 200 countries from the UNESCO Data Center at http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/document.aspx?ReportId=143&IF_Language=eng)

UNESCO and the UIS have jointly released the *World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education*, which includes over 120 maps, charts and tables featuring a wide range of sex-disaggregated indicators.

Girls and women remain deprived of full and equal opportunities for education. There has been progress towards parity at the primary level, but this tapers off at the secondary level in developing regions. The global economic crisis is deepening inequalities, made worse by cuts in education budgets and stagnating development support. Gender equality is one of the six goals of the global Education for All campaign that UNESCO leads. This was launched in 2000, when the countries of the world agreed to “eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality”. Gender equality is essential for protecting universal human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is also a powerful development accelerator. The education of girls and women can lead to a wide range of benefits – from improved maternal health, reduced infant mortality and fertility rates to increased prevention against HIV and AIDS. For this to happen, we need to target the gender gap at every level.
Electronic Newsletter November 2012
Editor: Marion Huxtable

School social work (学校社会工作) in China
The official 2011 estimate of the population of China was 1,347,350,000. School social work services have been started within the last decade, provided by non-governmental organizations in a number of different regions of China including Guangdong and Sichuan provinces, Shanghai, Beijing and Shenzhen. Although there are no official statistics regarding the number of school social workers around the country and specific information is only available in a few areas, it is estimated that there could be more than a thousand currently. According to the 2011 Reports on Development of Social Work in Shenzhen, there were 144 school social workers working in Shenzhen. Many social work student placements are now providing services in non-stationing mode or in specific school projects (such as anti-bullying programs that are a collaboration between a school and an NGO). Information provided by Charles Tong-Lit Leung, plus colleagues who are working as school social workers in Beijing city, and Sichuan & Guangdong provinces.

Schulsozialarbeit in Switzerland
The 2011 population was 7,655,628. German, French and Italian are the official languages. In the French speaking part of Switzerland school social work started in the 1970’s and in the German speaking part in the 1990’s. Currently there are about 600 social workers working in the school system. In some communities school social work is responsible to the department of social affairs, in other communities school social workers are employed by the school or by the department of education. In other cases representatives of both departments and of the school share the responsibility. It is the fastest growing service amongst all youth services in Switzerland. Normally the school social workers have an office directly at school where they can see students. There is more information, including news, links, contacts and publications, at the web site for the School Social Workers Association (SchulsozialarbeiterInnen-Verband http://www.ssav.ch.vu/) and also at http://www.schulsozialarbeit.ch/. Information provided by Dr. Florian Baier.
Skolkurator in Sweden
The population of Sweden is 9,103,788. School social work is well established. It started in the 1950’s and there are now between 1500 and 2000 Skolkuratorer. They provide a full range of services and are employed mostly directly by the school or county. The School Social Work Association of Sweden supports school social workers with active regional groups, educational programs, advice, and through collaboration with other professional groups and unions. The Sveriges Skolkuratorers Förening web site at http://www.skolkurator.nu/ includes many documents, links and the quarterly newsletter. The most recent newsletter is at http://www.skolkurator.nu/nr3_2012.htm. Information from Yvonne Wester, President of the Sveriges Skolkuratorers Förening.

2012 International Survey of School Social Work

The Goals of the International Network
To provide:
- Information about school social work around the world
- Links between school social work associations

The 2011 – 2012 survey of the status of school social work around the world will be published in the next issue of this newsletter. Responses were received from 31 countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada, China, Curacao, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, India, Japan, Korea, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mongolia, Macedonia, Malta, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, and Vietnam.

Information from earlier surveys is added in a Supplement for countries for which no current data were available: Estonia, Ghana, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom. If you have information about school social work from these or other countries, please let me know so that it can be included.
The International Network for School Social Work was founded in 1990 with outreach to social work associations around the world inquiring about the existence and status of social work services in schools. Anecdotal information and later periodic surveys provided a picture of how school social work was developing and growing. The International Network now has contacts in 80 countries. About 50 of these countries have some social workers working at or with schools. However, in many of these countries school social work professionals express the need to have improved service so that all school children can have readily available access to help. In several countries, school social work is just beginning and there are other countries where there are no services and social workers are eager to introduce services into the school system.

The results of the questionnaire sent to 51 countries in 2011 and 2012 are sent with this newsletter. The questionnaire has remained basically unchanged since it was first sent out in the 1990’s. The goal is to obtain contact information, names of professional school social work associations, and basic information about the school social work role, qualifications, job titles, how the service is provided, numbers of school social workers and when the program was initiated.

School social work continues to grow around the world. Contacts between school social workers in different countries are expanding, aided by the International Network for School Social Work (http://internationalnetwork-schoolsocialwork.htmlplanet.com) and the five international conferences that have taken place so far, the first in Chicago, USA in 1999, the second in Stockholm, Sweden in 2003, the third in September 2006 in Pusan, Korea, the fourth in April 2009 Auckland, New Zealand and the fifth in April 2012 in Accra, Ghana. International contact has provided many benefits to school social workers. Students have located information about school social work to help in their studies. Social workers trying to start school social work services have received valuable assistance. Recently social work professors have formed an alliance to look into providing international standards for school social work and how they could offer international training programs. This newsletter provides information from other countries that stimulates school social workers’ thinking about new ways of solving problems in schools.

This document, the 2012 International Survey of School Social Work contains contact information for national school social work associations and data about the status of school social work. I am sending it to you so that you can make this information available to school social workers in your country.
Responses were received from 31 countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada, China, Curacao, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, India, Japan, Korea, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mongolia, Macedonia, Malta, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, and Vietnam.

Information from earlier surveys is added in a Supplement for countries for which no current data are available, Estonia, Ghana, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom. If you can provide updated information about school social work in any of these countries or any other countries, please send it to me and I can then issue an amended version of the report.

I hope you will distribute this document to your professional associations and their members and encourage them to use it. The data it contains can be useful in social work education, to encourage increased international contacts and for promoting school social work in your own country.

You are free to copy and share this document providing you:

- Attribute the document and its contents to the International Network for School Social Work, Coordinator Marion Huxtable
- Do not alter or add to the document
- Do not use the document for commercial purposes

The Goals of the International Network are to provide:

- Information about school social work around the world
- Links between school social work associations

The School Social Work Association of America would like to invite all international school social work colleagues to be a part of the 2013 National School Social Work Conference, to be held in sunny San Diego on Wednesday, March 20 to Saturday March 23, 2013. For information about the conference go to https://m360.sswaa.org/event.aspx?eventID=50714&instance=0 or contact sswaaconference@gmail.com if you have questions.