



International Network for School Social Work

<http://internationalnetwork-schoolsocialwork.htmlplanet.com>

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Website

The web site of the International Network has a new look, but the address is the same <http://internationalnetwork-schoolsocialwork.htmlplanet.com>. Visit the site to find links to school social work associations.

News from around the world

We now have information about school social work in 41 countries: **Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Canada, China Hong Kong, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Japan, Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Mongolia, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Vietnam.**

Some of these countries have only small pilot programs. For example, Kyrgyzstan has a pilot program in Sokuluk, a small town outside the capital. Social workers have just started working in schools in Vietnam.

Luxembourg

Francoise Kerger writes about school social work initiatives in Luxembourg. In this small country the 25 school social workers meet every six weeks and plan their priorities. School social work is relatively new in Luxembourg and the group has focused recently on some vital basic issues for families and for their profession.

Concern for the large number of poor families in Luxembourg led them to ask the Ministry of Education to provide free school meals for children from very low-income families. Now 250 children receive a hot meal every day at school and there are plans to extend the program next year.

The group is also planning an annual report in which they can present to the Ministry of Education and the school system administrators the objectives of school social work and provide data to show that they have reached these objectives. The annual report will also give them a baseline for their work, comparison of schools, measurement of progress from year to year and help them to adjust their objectives accordingly.

Mongolia

Erdenetsetseg writes from Mongolia that the Education Law now has an amendment “Social Work in Schools”. A team of specialists and practitioners worked with Save the Children, UK on new articles in the law and amendments of existing articles. The widespread changes include a ban on corporal punishment and protection of the rights of all children including ethnic minorities and children with disabilities.

One of the amendments creates the title “education social worker”. The education social worker is a specialist who supports the socialization of children to prevent negative outcomes. The education social worker works directly with both individuals and groups, using assessment of problems and professional advice for students, parents and teachers. It is anticipated that education social workers will eventually work at all educational levels, including vocational training centers and colleges, and this is most likely the reason for the title “education social worker” rather than “school social worker”. The amendment passed on January 1, 2007 and is the culmination of several years work to introduce social work services into the schools. In little over ten years, education social workers have been established in every secondary school in Mongolia.



Progress in School Social Work

The information from Luxembourg and Mongolia illustrates progress in school social work.

Professional Associations

Although school social work is relatively new in Luxembourg, the 25 practitioners meet regularly in order to develop goals for the profession and gather data so they can interpret it to the school system. Working together in some form of professional association is a way of influencing education policy. In larger countries or where many school social workers are employed, establishing a national professional association can move forward the school social work agenda, illustrated by the example of Mongolia, where the professional association has contributed to the progress of social work services in schools and possibly colleges.

School social work in the Law

Writing school social work into the education law as the social workers in Mongolia have now done is a goal of school social work professional associations in many countries.

Free school meals

School social workers know that children are not ready to learn when they are hungry. In many countries it is still a routine task for school social workers to check whether children qualify for free school meals. For example, in the United States in 2004, 17,060,510 children received a free or reduced price lunch due to poverty or low income. Many also had free breakfast. Reference: http://www.frac.org/State_Of_States/2006/states/US.pdf

Conferences

NASWE’s Annual Conference will be held on 12th and 13th April 2007 at St. Giles Hotel, London. The focus is on access and inclusion of all vulnerable children.

For information about the conference visit <http://www.NASWE.org.uk>.

SSWAA’s Annual Conference will be held April 18 – 21, 2007 in Orlando, Florida. The brochure is at <http://www.sswaa.org/conf/2007ConfBrochure.PDF>.