



International Network for School Social Work

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Online School Social Work Handbooks

Handbooks and manuals have been written in several countries to guide school social workers and their professional associations. These handbooks typically cover basic information such as the role and responsibilities of school social workers, although each one has a different emphasis. Some provide material on issues such as licensing, state and federal laws, literature, professional associations and professional standards, some cover standards and others provide research results and references to the school social work literature. School social work associations in countries where a Handbook of School Social Work has not been developed may find these examples offer useful information about topics to be covered and potential uses of a handbook.

A Manual of School Social Work Practice in Minnesota, a midwestern state, is an outstanding example. It was produced and published jointly by the Minnesota Department of Education and the Minnesota School of Social Workers Association in 2007 and can be found online at <http://www.msswa.org/downloads/MSSWA%20Manual.pdf>. In 211 pages it covers the mission of school social work, the role of school social workers, services offered, licensure requirements, special education policies, professional associations and a brochure on school social work. It contains much useful information about evaluating children's needs, various intervention strategies, prevention programs and other services provided by school social workers. There are many references to resource material.



In **North Carolina**, a southeastern state in the US, there is a **Toolbox for New School Social Workers** prepared by Gary Shaffer at UNC. Although much of the information is specific for school social workers in North Carolina, it is a good example of the kind of information that should be provided for those entering the field, such as how to become licensed, school social work standards, helpful books and journals, professional associations to join, laws and legislation,



North Carolina School Social Workers Association

children with disabilities, and many helpful tips on getting started in the school system. http://dailyreportage.com/toolbox_for_new_school_social_workers_school_social_work_r_1308663.html

The **School Social Work Association of Sweden** has **A Guide for School Social Workers** www.skolkurator.nu/old/description_school_2013.pdf. Rather



than simply serving as a guide for the school social workers themselves, it is intended to serve as an aid for social workers who wish to share information about school social work with politicians, school personnel or other groups. It provides a straightforward description of what school social workers do. It gives the **Goal of School Social Work:** *That all students will reach their academic goals and develop socially and emotionally in an environment that promotes learning.* **The Mission is:** *School social workers carry out their work duties in accordance with the overall mission of the school as stated in the school policies. School social workers are members of the school's student services team. School social workers serve as experts on social work and social legislation in the schools and are responsible for providing social and psychosocial competence.*

School social workers in **Australia** have prepared **Practice Standards for School Social Workers** www.aasw.asn.au/document/item/814. The



document describes the main areas of school social work practice and provides objectives and several standards for each type of practice. This provides benchmarks for the assessment of school social work practice and a guide for planning ongoing improvement in school social work service delivery. The objectives and standards are useful for developing learning contracts of social work students and for evaluating performance of school social workers. The detailed objectives also provide a clear statement about the activities of school social workers.

The School Social Work Handbook is based on research conducted for Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in **Japan**. The research was conducted by Yoriko Yamano at the Osaka Prefectural University. This handbook summarizes various topics to be utilized by education related providers, school social workers and researchers. It explains school social work in Japan, the role of the board of education and the history of school social work in Japan and overseas. Much of the handbook is taken up with a report of the 3-year study that was conducted on the current practice of school social work in Japan and how it is being received



in the school system. The surveys that were conducted for the research provide a detailed picture of the current challenges faced in the school system, the needs of teachers, students and parents and how social workers are perceived in the school system during these early phases of the introduction of school social work in Japan. The handbook closes with a detailed checklist that is a practical self-assessment tool for school social workers to use. The checklist provides guidance on ways to be accepted in the school system and how to conduct effective interventions. http://www.human.osakafu-u.ac.jp/ssw-opu/images/pdf/SSW-handBook_2011.pdf.