



International Network for School Social Work

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

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School Social Work Association of America

In 1994 a group of fifty school social work leaders from around the US met for three days to debate the merits of forming a national association for school social workers. The outcome was a decision to form an association to be called the School Social Work Association of America. A steering committee representing the different regions of the country was formed and given the task of launching the association. The SSWAA was officially formed in 1996 and had progressed sufficiently by 1999 to host the first international school social work conference.

SSWAA's Organizational Goals:

- To strengthen the profession of school social work by maintaining and increasing the number of school social workers employed by local education agencies across the nation.
- To offer opportunities for ongoing professional development.
- To open nationwide channels of communication and information sharing.
- To respond in a timely and efficient manner to the changing needs of school social workers.
- To influence public policy and educational issues.
- To demonstrate school social workers' effectiveness through evaluation and research.
- To assist school social workers in creating linkages among home, school and community on behalf of students and their families.
- To mentor persons providing school social work services to achieve the highest professional standards.

The School Social Work Association of America has a new web site at <http://www.sswaa.org/>. A visit to the SSWAA web site gives news, events, resources and many links. The web site gives you a sense of the wide range of activities that SSWAA has developed in just over a decade.

News

The News section of the site gives timely articles on topics relevant to school social workers (such as mental health, homeless students, gay and lesbian students and children of prisoners) gleaned from newspapers, magazines and professional journals.

Events

National and State conferences are listed here. The 12th national conference is in Philadelphia in March 2009, followed by St. Louis in April 2010 and Boston in March 2012.

Resources

This page holds extensive resources, including brochures, books, white papers, position statements and presentations. These resources are a goldmine of information.

For example there are **White Papers** on the following topics:

- Response to Intervention: New Roles for School Social Workers
- A Technical Assistance Guide For School Social Workers
- School Social Work as a Career
- The Connection of Federal Legislation to the Practice of School Social Work

Position Statements include:

- Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Questioning Youth
- Help to Prevent Bullying
- School Social Workers and Confidentiality
- Educational Rights for Students with Social Maladjustment

Under the heading **Presentations** there are two complete PowerPoint presentations that can be used with various audiences such as parents or school boards. They would also be useful for showing to social work students as an introduction to the role of a school social worker.

Under **Advocacy** you can see the coalitions and the legislation that SSWAA is concerned with.

The **Links** page contains other professional associations, state associations for school social work and other miscellaneous links to information sources.

The many resources, events and links on the SSWAA are geared to school social work practice in the US and the needs of its members. The web site covers current issues common to social workers in US schools. However there is much that is also relevant to school social workers in any country. Often the children's issues, the problems of working in schools, the need to form coalitions, the need to influence legislation and the development of guidelines for school social work are similar. Much of the information is freely available and extra information plus an online forum is there for members.

