



## International Network for School Social Work

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#### Where School Social Work is Needed Now

There are 196 countries in the world and at least 40 of them have social workers in the schools. There are several countries where social workers have identified a need to provide services in schools to address barriers and help all pupils succeed. While a specific problem such as inclusion of pupils with special needs or poor attendance is sometimes the initial concern that prompts schools to hire social workers, the best school social work services deal with the wide range of issues. This newsletter showcases countries on three continents where social workers are attempting to introduce school social work.

#### Botswana

The 2010 Botswana Status Report on Millennium Development Goals states:

*School-based statistics show that Botswana has made and sustained significant progress towards universal access to basic education for boys and girls alike. Key dimensions of educational performance, e.g., enrolment, adult literacy, school infrastructure, basic equipment, supply of teaching materials and teacher qualifications have improved markedly since independence. Botswana has made good progress towards achieving universal access to ten years of basic education for its children. This is a considerably more ambitious target than the “full course of primary schooling” that has been set globally. Trends in literacy rates amongst 15-24 year olds, enrolment, and dropout statistics suggest that Botswana is educating its children.*

[http://web.undp.org/africa/documents/mdg/botswana\\_2010.pdf](http://web.undp.org/africa/documents/mdg/botswana_2010.pdf)

Yet, rapid social change has brought social problems that affect the school life of children and are hindering the nation’s goal of excellence in education. Schools are recognizing that teachers cannot handle alone the complex problems that children bring to school. In 2004, T. Maundeni and D. Ntseane of the Department of Social Work at the University of Botswana addressed the question “Are Social Workers Needed in Botswana Schools? Some Food for Thought”. In this

article, aimed at sparking debate and stimulating research that might lead to action, the authors reviewed the history of school social work and discussed the case for placing social workers in Botswana schools. They proposed to address the personal and social problems of pupils and also to make the school a center of service for families. Following placement of social work students in the schools for fieldwork experience, follow-up discussion focused on how to work with policy-makers and schools to bring social work services to the schools. *Journal of African Studies* vol. 18(2004) no. 1 <http://archive.lib.msu.edu/DMC/African%20Journals/pdfs/PULA/pula018001/pula018001011.pdf>

## Bulgaria

In 2010 Kaloyan Damyantov of the National Association of Resource Teachers (<http://www.narubg.org/English>) wrote a report focused on the need for social workers in schools. The new education law, together with the ongoing process of deinstitutionalizing educational services, has made it a priority to integrate children with special needs into the general education environment. He described the value of using social workers to improve the welfare of children with special needs and to promote their right to equal access to education. Outreach to parents, child protection, ensuring children's rights, coordinating with community agencies, consulting with school management on



adapting the classroom, providing mediation and group work are some of the services needed to make inclusion of children with disabilities successful. Introducing social work services into the schools is an ongoing effort. *Trakia Journal of Sciences*, Vol. 8, Suppl. 3, pp 278-282, 2010 <http://tru.unisz.bg/tsj/Vol8.Suppl.3.2010/K.Dmyantov.pdf>

## Jamaica

### Principals Renew Call For Social Workers In Schools



President of the Jamaica Association of Principals of Secondary High Schools, Sharon Reid, is renewing calls for social workers to be assigned to schools, to assist administrators in dealing with students who portray delinquent behaviour. The call is being made in relation to police reports, which indicate that more than 600 weapons have been taken from students since January. Reid noted that while resources are limited in the educational sector, more focus should be placed on the emotional and social needs of children.

Monique Grange, Assistant News Editor *the Gleaner/Power 106 News Centre* December 4, 2012 <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/latest/article.php?id=41535>