



School Social Work
Association of America



2024 National Conference Poster Sessions March 13, 2024 Baltimore, MD

PLEASE NOTE: This listing is provided to aid individuals with registration. All session descriptions, titles, and sessions themselves are subject to change at any time and without notice.

**A Final Program, including learning goals and presenters, will be posted in January 2024*

**For information on Pre-Con Sessions and Keynotes, see SSWAA's Pre-Conference and Keynote Descriptions Document

Poster Presentations

Perspectives on Providing Inclusive Education Among Children with Severe Intellectual Disabilities

Inclusion education is being advocated for all across the world for children who have special needs. Specifically, children who have severe intellectual disabilities are a population that is beginning to have more inclusive education experiences in k-12 settings. This qualitative study interviewed 23 school social workers (N=23) in order to conduct a thematic analysis on the perspectives of inclusive education for k-12 students who have severe intellectual disabilities. Results indicate that school social workers feel that mainstream teachers are not always properly trained on how to educate children who have severe special needs and are also struggle with classroom management when there are students with multiple diverse needs in their classroom. Implications for practice are discussed.

Presenter: Kaycee Bills, PhD, MSW



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A Secondary Data Analysis of the Mental Health Status of Adolescents During COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted school dynamics, the nature of familial and social relationships, and normative development paths for U.S. students. Individual, familial, and structural factors determined the mental health (MH) impact of these disruptions. It is critical to examine these risk factors as they may have negatively impacted high school students perceived MH during the pandemic. This study examines factors determining the perceived MH status of U.S. high school students in grades 9-12 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Presenter: Marjorie Colindres, MSW, LCSW

Project SSWEND: Scholar Experiences as School Social Workers in Alaska

The School-Based Social Work Education and Network Development (Project SSWEND) is a Department of Education funded program that aims to train and place 31 school social workers across the Southcentral Alaska region. As a first of its kind program designed to address the mental health care needs of Alaska's largest and most diverse school district, this innovative project provides professional training and network development for students interested in working in school districts across Alaska. This poster will deliver an overview of the shared experiences of the first cohort of scholars to complete Project SSWEND. Scholars will share their experiences working in diverse schools and discuss how social workers in similar contexts can work with diverse and underserved populations.

Presenters: Matthew Cuellar, PhD, MSW and Colleagues

A Transformative Intervention: YPAR is a Therapeutic Social Justice Approach for Group Work

Social Workers serving youth often seek evidence-based models for providing psychosocial interventions and transformative youth development using innovative approaches that promote youth to address problems in their social environment. This presentation draws on a qualitative study designed to examine a group of urban Black girls during their engagement in a YPAR project. The content will present an evidence-based framework with key tenets and stages grounded in social work practice models and YPAR implemented in school and community settings.

Presenter: Shadonna Davis, PhD, LCSW



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The Therapy Box: A Play-Based Classroom Intervention for Escape-Maintained Aggression

Many students present with behaviors that decrease the amount of time students are able to engage in academic instruction. Often, these behavioral challenges exhibited by students are behavioral excesses and a form of communication about their specific needs. The Therapy Box is a new play therapy treatment package, used as a Response to Intervention (RtI) Tier 2 and Tier 3 behavioral intervention for identified students in public schools that display escape-maintained aggression. The Therapy Box assists students with increasing Emotional Intelligence and their social-emotional literacy while providing a supportive, caring, and safe classroom environment. The Therapy Box must be implemented in conjunction with play therapy session that include both child-centered and directed play therapy.

Presenter: Susan Elswick, EdD, MSSW

Evaluating School-Based Bullying Programs: A Research Methods-Based Approach

The risks of bullying and victimization of students in all grades has been extensively researched, as has programs that address and contribute to a safe, more equitable climate. This poster presents information on the effects of bullying and bullying programs, but presents R as a practical statistical analysis tool for school social workers to for ongoing evaluation of an implemented school-based bullying program. The goal of this poster is to empower social workers to confidently track outcomes for more informed, data-driven, proactive decision making within a multidisciplinary school setting.

Presenters: Susan Mason, PhD, MSSW, LCSW-R and
Christine Vyshedsky, PhD, MSW, LCSW

Reconceptualizing Teacher Support: Predicting Wellbeing Through Macro Economic Factors and Intra-Personal Characteristics

Teachers are leaving the profession at an alarming rate. Decreased public support for public education, economic factors impacting teachers' already low salaries, and school shootings have increased stress in schools. School social work traditionally focuses on serving students, however research and services are needed to support teachers, as their wellbeing directly impacts student wellbeing. Data collected in summer and fall of 2023 from public K-12 teachers in the U.S. using structural equation modeling will show how wellbeing impacts retention, how housing and transportation burdens affect retention, and correlations of perceived safety with teacher outcomes. Results will prompt discussion about school social work engagement in policy change, advocacy, and direct support of teachers.

Presenter: Anna O'Dell, LMSW, PhD Candidate



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Leading Student Support Service Departments Through Conflict to Achieve Breakthrough Results

This poster presentation will explore the phenomenological conceptual replication study of how exemplary student support service leaders establish common ground and produce breakthrough results by using the six domains of conflict transformation. Through this presentation the lived experiences of eight student support service leaders in K-12 public schools within Los Angeles and Orange counties in California will highlight specific conflicts these leaders faced and ways they overcame them. The presentation will go through the research methodology, identified themes, findings, and conclusions of the research process. Key recommendations will be presented from this research to support and guide current and future student support service leaders in K-12 public schools.

Presenter: Amber Ramirez, EdD, MSW, LCSW

Social Emotional Learning Coordination Overview: Screening and Curriculum

This presentation focuses on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Coordination at a district level or in large school districts. Participants will develop rational literature and research basis for universal SEL assessment and curricular supports. This presentation also focuses on evaluating and determining if there are next steps for school social workers practice or environment, informed by engaging with a case example of implementing universal SEL screening. Finally, there will be a focus on engaging in a variety of SEL activities to consider where school social workers' own district, school, or program currently is within this work, and consider possible next steps in curriculum development or implementation.

Presenter: Diana Rarich, MSW, LCSW



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