

TECHNICAL NOTE

SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS IN SCHOOLS: THEIR ROLE IN ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND OTHER CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS



CONTENTS

CLARIFICATION OF TERMS USED IN THIS TECHNICAL NOTE, IN THE CONTEXT OF SCHOOLS

Social service workforce

The Global Social Service Workforce Alliance defines the social service workforce as: “an inclusive concept referring to a broad range of governmental and nongovernmental professionals and paraprofessionals who work with children, youth, adults, older persons, families and communities to ensure healthy development and well-being. The social service workforce focuses on preventative, responsive and promotive services that are informed by the humanities and social sciences, Indigenous knowledges, discipline-specific and interdisciplinary knowledge and skills, and ethical principles. Social service workers engage people, structures and organizations to facilitate access to needed services, alleviate poverty, challenge and reduce discrimination, promote social justice and human rights, and prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and family separation. Given the diversities across contexts, this definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels.”¹

Throughout this technical note, ‘social service workforce’ is used as a generic term to refer to individuals, within the inclusive concept of the workforce outlined above, who play a key role in supporting child protection for students in schools, working both directly in schools and with the wider community in which the school is situated. The composition of the social service workforce, and its presence in schools, can vary greatly from one country to the next, and between low- and high-income countries. There is also considerable variety in the titles used for social service workers working in or directly with schools, including but not limited to: school social worker, education welfare officer, child care worker or child welfare officer. In areas where such discrete social service workforce roles in or linked to schools do not exist, there are a number of roles in the staff teams of schools, such as school counsellors or psychologists, or school nurses, as well as teachers and heads of schools, who also often hold child protection responsibilities.

Child protection

UNICEF uses the term ‘child protection’ to refer to prevention and response to violence, exploitation and abuse of children in all contexts. This includes reaching children who are especially vulnerable to these threats, such as those living without family care, on the streets, or in situations of conflict or natural disasters.²

Violence against children

Throughout this technical note, ‘violence against children’ is used to refer to all forms of violence against school students, which either take place in school or take place in the family or community and are then disclosed at school, or the signs, symptoms or effects are observed at school. This includes physical, sexual and psychological violence, sexual harassment and exploitation, and all forms of bullying, whether perpetrated by peers or adults.

Mental health and psychosocial support

Apart from violence and abuse, there are a wide range of mental health and emotional well-being issues with which school students are likely to need support. These include issues related to peer relations, sexual and reproductive health, adolescent pregnancy and other child health concerns with social and behavioural dimensions. This also includes thoughts or acts related to self-harm and suicide, issues of substance abuse, anxiety and conduct disorders. Students may also need support to prevent and address stigma and discrimination related to their mental health; disability; economic status; nationality; racial, ethnic or linguistic background; refugee or immigration status; gender; or sexuality.

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INTRODUCTION

“Guided by the 2008 Child Protection Strategy, there has been a clear shift to systems strengthening, including a clearer focus on strengthening the social service workforce in recent years... Strengthening child protection systems across all contexts also requires enhancing coordination and collaboration between sectors (particularly Social Welfare, Justice, Education, Health and Social Protection) to strengthen legal and policy frameworks and make quality services available for prevention and response.”

- United Nations Children's Fund, Child Protection Strategy 2021-2030³

Schools can play a critical role in addressing violence against children and other child protection concerns within schools and communities. This role and responsibility can be best fulfilled with the help of on-site support staff, including social service workers. Teachers play an essential role in the prevention and early identification of child protection concerns, however integrating social service workers into school structures ensures that child protection concerns can be addressed more effectively and with the appropriate follow-up, referral and coordination in the community. This kind of follow-up and coordination with external agencies is more challenging for teachers and school administrators to do alone, as in many countries they lack the resources, time and capacity to do so.

This technical note draws on the available evidence to explore the optimal role and functions of the social service workforce to address violence against children and other child protection concerns in schools. The technical note highlights key elements of how child protection concerns are addressed in schools across a range of contexts, with a focus on schools that operate under the remit of ministries of education in low- and middle-income countries.

This technical note broadly defines the scope of services that the social service workforce, if sufficiently resourced and supported, could provide working in or with schools, and which school administrators and leaders would need to support. It also outlines the multi-agency child protection services in or linked to schools that governments and ministries of education should support in order to uphold children's right to learning and protection from all forms of violence.

The technical note shows that the integration of child protection into school settings is not only a state obligation under the Convention on the Rights of the Children, but can also mitigate protection risks, improve overall child well-being and lead to better educational outcomes.

The target audience for this technical note are policy makers and other stakeholders in the child protection and education sectors, including government, United Nations, donors and civil society.

As this is a global technical note, the findings and recommendations are intended as overarching and general recommendations applicable to most contexts and have not been developed for a specific context in any one region or country.

The central role of the social service workforce in child protection

The social service workforce plays a central role in supporting children and families in communities by alleviating poverty, identifying, and managing risks, and facilitating access to and delivery of social services to enhance child and family well-being. A well-developed social service workforce is also key to promoting social justice, reducing discrimination, challenging, and changing harmful behaviors and social norms, and preventing and responding to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation and family separation.

Investing in the social service workforce will yield high returns for child protection. Dedicated and qualified human resources in child protection are essential to coordinating efforts and resources and providing a system of support for children and families across all sectors, including social protection, justice, health, education, security and disaster risk management. Lack of investment in the social service workforce will undermine all other efforts to strengthen the child protection system in a sustainable manner, including enforcement and implementation of policies and laws, operability and effectiveness of case management systems, and service delivery.⁴



SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Schools are critical spaces to address violence against children and other child protection concerns

- Schools provide the opportunity and space to address a wide set of child protection challenges that occur within schools and communities.
- Children spend a significant amount of time each day in school, making it a space where child protection concerns often present themselves and can be identified and addressed, and giving school-based staff a vital frontline role in identification and response.
- School-based child protection concerns do not occur in isolation from their societal context. Rather, they reflect what happens in the home, school and community.
- Addressing child protection through a 'whole school approach', which nurtures positive, trusting and non-violent relationships between and among both staff and students, not only helps prevent

violence in schools but also is likely to enhance students' engagement in school activities, academic achievement and overall well-being. This can be particularly significant in mitigating the effects of various forms of adversity that students may experience at home and in the community.

- For the most marginalized students, schools can provide crucial support and social services that they would otherwise struggle to access.

2

States are obligated to protect children from all forms of violence in school settings

- Schools have a responsibility to not only educate students, but also to respond to child protection needs.
- International legal norms and standards clearly articulate the indivisibility of children's rights in education and child protection. A child's right to protection is inalienable and applies in all settings, including schools.

3

Preventing and addressing child protection in schools also helps achieve educational outcomes

- Child protection principles and approaches are consistent with academic mandates, in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),⁵ by promoting educational environments that are safe, supportive, fair and responsive to students' social and emotional, as well as educational, needs. These child protection approaches also contribute to positive educational outcomes by emphasizing early intervention and positive, non-violent, approaches to dealing with challenging behaviour.



- Child protection in schools helps strengthen students' academic progress and overall social and emotional development by removing or reducing barriers to learning, and meeting students' basic physical, mental health and psychosocial needs.

4 Children are better protected in schools when schools develop and apply child protection policies and such policies are integrated with wider child protection systems

- Ministries of education should consider students' child protection needs and promote child participation when developing education strategies, policies and budgets.
- Integrating child protection programming into education programs can help mitigate protection risks, improve overall child well-being and lead to better educational outcomes.
- Inclusive and collaborative approaches based on shared goals among teachers, school administrators, social service workers and community members are critical to achieve safe and positive learning environments in schools.
- It is especially important to implement a team-based approach that includes the social service workforce to facilitate effective coordination of services and interventions.

5 If trained and supported, teachers and school administrators can address child protection issues, but they will usually have limited time and capacity. Social service workers in schools can effectively address child protection issues as they arise and connect interventions at school with the wider child protection system and services.

- Education authorities should effectively recruit, train, support and monitor teachers to ensure successful child protection responses.
- Teachers and school administrators usually have primary responsibility for reporting child protection concerns, but in many countries, they do not have the training and support, or time and competence, to recognize signs

and symptoms of abuse or violence, to record concerns, or to make referrals appropriately, safely and promptly.⁶

- Working together with external agencies is challenging for teachers and school administrators, especially if they lack the resources, time, mandate and capacity to effectively follow-up on child protection concerns when making external referrals and collaborating with other agencies (a role the social service workforce is well placed to carry out). This is made even more challenging when the child protection services that teachers and school administrators are trying to report to and coordinate with are under-staffed and under-resourced.

6 The social service workforce should be integrated into schools and education systems

- Social service workers both located in and working with schools – when appropriately capacitated, resourced and supported – can effectively address child protection concerns facing students, including violence, mental health, psychosocial well-being and holistic development.
- The key role of the social service workforce needs to be recognized by ministries of education. Ministries of social welfare and ministries of education need to work together to ensure the integration of the workforce within education structures.
- It is important to be clear on the scope of services that social service workers in schools can provide, that school directors and administrators should support, and that students and families can expect when the social service workforce is deployed in schools.
- Realistic job descriptions, working conditions, capacity development and mental health and psychosocial support are essential for effective social service workforce practice in schools. Regular reviews of goals, objectives, accomplishments and accountability procedures of social service workforce in schools are also necessary.⁷

- The focus of the social service workforce will depend on professional training, grade level of students served, caseload size, school district size and prevalent child protection concerns within the community. The efficiency and effectiveness of the social service workforce will also depend on the availability and quality of child protection services and the quality of the referral system itself.
- Depending on context and resources, social service workers can be school-based, or community-based and linked to either one school or a small cluster of schools, with regular visits to each. However, whichever approach or model is taken, it is important not to overstretch the social service workforce to the point where interventions become less effective.

7 Social service workers can provide promotive, preventive and responsive services, which are the components of a multi-tiered child protection response system that includes schools

- Such multi-tier approaches to service delivery can effectively address significant needs of student populations.
- A full continuum of services, ranging from preventive supports for all students to more intensive and specialized support for at-risk and directly affected students, is essential to effectively address school safety and student mental health.
- Social service workers in schools can play a critical role in providing more intensive supports as well as in facilitating an overall preventive school environment.

8 Effective child protection in schools is underpinned by multi-stakeholder engagement and a holistic approach

- Effective child protection in schools relies on effective multi-stakeholder engagement built on trusting relationships at all levels and holistic approaches informed by an ecological perspective, which understands and engages with the student in the context of their family, school and community.

9 Social service workers can support referral to external agencies and engage with families and communities, thus it is important to ensure robust referral and outreach mechanisms are in place

- It is essential for schools and child protection systems to understand and cooperate with each other.
- Safe and successful learning environments are fostered through collaboration between school-based staff and initiatives and community-based service providers.
- Social service workers can play a critical job facilitating effective coordination of services and interventions, including ensuring appropriate referrals and follow-up (and playing a liaison or accompaniment role with students, families and school staff).
- Schools should engage families and communities as meaningful partners. Families and communities play a fundamental role in child protection and are frequently best placed to protect their children.

10 There is a need to advocate for the effective development and professionalization of the social service workforce in schools

- A majority of low- and middle-income countries currently lack programmes for involvement of social service workforce in schools, but the community-based, holistic and strength-based approaches of social service workers make them uniquely suited to address the many complex and compounding factors that contribute to student well-being, in and outside of schools.
- There is a need to advocate for the social service workforce in schools to become institutionalized with appropriate training, professional standards, licensing and certification, legislation that defines and mandates the role of the social service workforce in schools and the support of professional associations.
- Capacity building for teachers, school administrators and social service workers should cover their role in child protection including identification, referrals, coordination, monitoring and response.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Schools are critical spaces to address violence against children and other child protection concerns

Children usually spend six to eight hours in school, five days per week,⁸ making it a likely space for child protection concerns to appear⁹ and giving school-based staff a vital frontline role in identification and response. Schools can therefore play a critical role to ensure the safety and well-being of children given the unique level of access to children that school-based staff have.¹⁰

It is becoming increasingly common worldwide for schools to have a legal duty to report child protection concerns within and outside school settings to the relevant state authorities. This includes signs or symptoms of child abuse, including any unexplained physical injury. It also includes indications that a child has experienced or is at risk of sexual or emotional abuse, sexual exploitation, or of neglect by parents or caregivers of a child's well-being, health, education or safety.¹¹

In addition to reporting suspected child abuse or neglect, schools provide the opportunity and space to address a wider set of child protection concerns within schools and communities, including:

- all forms of violence – physical, sexual and psychological;
- violence or bullying in peer relationships and adolescent intimate partner violence;
- sexual harassment;
- stigma and discrimination related to mental health, disability, economic status, nationality, racial, ethnic or linguistic background, refugee or immigration status, gender and sexuality;
- child and adolescent mental health, including self-harm and suicide, substance abuse and conduct disorders;

- sexual and reproductive health, adolescent pregnancy and other child health concerns with social and behavioural dimensions;
- school drop out, including in relation to child labour, exploitation and child marriage;
- delayed or impaired child development (intellectual, psychological, emotional, physical, social or cultural), which may result from external stressors, including abuse and neglect in the family;
- irregular or low school attendance, which is a concern in itself owing to its negative impact on learning, but may also be an indicator of abuse or neglect in the context of the family or community.

Violence in schools is one of the most visible child protection harms

“Violence in schools can take many forms, ranging from physical violence to psychological violence. It is often expressed through acts of bullying, intimidation, and repression. Violence in schools creates insecurity and fear which harm the general school climate and infringe pupils’ right to learn in a safe, unthreatening environment. Schools cannot fulfill their role as places of learning and socialization if children are not in an environment free of violence.”¹²

School-based child protection concerns do not occur in isolation but rather reflect what happens in the home, school and community.¹³ Schools are deeply affected by and enmeshed within the predominant attitudes and social norms towards children in the wider community.¹⁴

Their regular access to students also allows schools to identify child protection risks within the family and community. Schools may also have the advantage of being able to address child protection concerns more

effectively than other statutory agencies by providing a non-threatening and non-stigmatizing point of access for children, families and communities.¹⁵

Schools that take a ‘whole school approach’ and nurture positive, trusting and non-violent relationships between staff and students, and amongst students, can more effectively support all students to greater academic achievement, increased well-being and greater engagement. This approach can be particularly significant in mitigating the effects of various forms of adversity that students may experience at home and in the community.¹⁶ Furthermore, for children who have been exposed to trauma, the opportunity to form meaningful relationships with caring adults is critical.¹⁷ For students from families that face social marginalization, discrimination and exclusion, schools often provide crucial support and services that they cannot easily access elsewhere, owing to the societal barriers they face.

Comprehensive and collaborative approaches by teachers, school administrators, social service workers and relevant community members are critical for safe and positive schools. One-off isolated actions and initiatives are not effective. To address child protection and support learning, schools need consistent, sustained and effective collaborative approaches, alongside adequate time and resources for implementation and evaluation.¹⁸

The accountability of the education sector for the delivery of child protection outcomes¹⁹

UNICEF’s Child Protection Strategy 2021-2030 notes the following core accountabilities of the education sector:

- (i) schools as a safe and protective space for children, including in emergencies;
- (ii) education systems that address bullying and violence in schools (peer-to-peer and staff-to-peer),
- (iii) children in school learning about threats and protective factors, e.g., gender-based violence, sexual violence, comprehensive sexuality education, female genital mutilation, and child marriage;
- (iv) schools acting as identification and referral points for specialized child protection services;
- (v) schools ensuring the safety of students as they travel to and from schools;
- (vi) digital learning platforms proactively seeking to protect children from online harms;
- (vii) national education curricula integrating digital literacy, including cyber safety.



The child protection impact of school related closures due to COVID-19

School closures due to COVID-19 highlighted not only the negative educational impact, but also the increased protection risks faced by children in different contexts when they are no longer regularly attending school. The consequences of school closures on education and child protection have included: loss of learning and impediments to providing inclusive, equitable, quality education; negative impact on child well-being and healthy development; and increased child protection risks and harms experienced by children owing to the increased amount of time spent at home or in the community in stressful family situations (owing to the social and economic stresses of the pandemic) or without suitable adult care and supervision.²⁰ These increased risks were exacerbated by the loss of the role that schools can play to prevent, identify and address child protection concerns, including through referral to specialist agencies.²¹

The World Bank and UNESCO have documented how school closures imperiled children's overall well-being and development due to the loss of the critical role schools play globally delivering essential health services, nutritious meals, protection and psychosocial supports.²²

2

States are obligated to protect children from all forms of violence in school settings

A child's right to protection is inalienable and applies in all settings, including schools. As a result, Ministries of Education have an obligation to ensure that schools are not only able to educate students, but to address and respond to child protection needs.

International legal norms and standards clearly and strongly articulate the indivisibility of children's rights in education and child protection. As UNICEF has highlighted, "International standards and conventions, particularly as delineated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, are unequivocal on children's rights to protection, which should not be compromised in any way and cannot be separated from the realization of other entitlements, such as the right to education."²⁴ Under Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, schools have an obligation to protect children under their care.



Cote d'Ivoire²³

Adolescent girls in Cote d'Ivoire are experiencing increased rates of drop out in the context of COVID-19 school

closures. The closures have accentuated factors that have historically disadvantaged girls – household poverty, early marriage and gender-based violence. In response, the Departments of Education and the Department of Social Protection partnered to deploy social workers to support high risk girls and their families. While linking out-of-school girls and their families to social services and professional training, social workers worked closely with school staff to monitor and support at-risk girls.



3

Preventing and addressing child protection in schools also helps achieve educational outcomes

Regardless of legal mandates, addressing child protection can improve education outcomes and help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for education.²⁵ Schools that nurture positive and trusting relationships between staff and students can more effectively support all students to succeed, particularly those affected by adversity.²⁶ Child protection in schools helps strengthen students' academic progress and overall social and emotional development by removing barriers to learning, and meeting students' basic physical, mental health and psychosocial needs.²⁷

Child protection principles and approaches are consistent with academic mandates, in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, by promoting educational environments that are safe; have supportive, fair and responsive policies; and emphasize early intervention and positive behavioral interventions.²⁸

4

Children are better protected in schools when schools develop and apply child protection policies and such policies are integrated with wider child protection systems

Integrating child protection programming into education programs can help mitigate protection risks, improve overall child well-being and lead to better educational outcomes.²⁹ Ministries of education should therefore consider students' child protection needs and promote child participation when developing education strategies, policies and budgets. Schools that lack clear and specific guidance on how to prevent and respond to child protection concerns are likely to either respond to such concerns in ad hoc ways or not at all.³⁰

Joint and integrated child protection and education programming:

- supports and encourages a child-centred approach that can prevent students slipping through gaps between services;

- maximizes the impact of multiple sector interventions; and
- reduces costs and duplication.³¹

Schools that prioritize child protection start by conveying to students, families and communities that all students are respected and valued.³² Integrating child protection programming into education programs can help mitigate protection risks, improve overall child well-being and lead to better educational outcomes.³³ Inclusive and collaborative approaches based on shared goals among teachers, school administrators, social service workers and community members are critical to achieve safe and positive learning environments in schools.

It is especially important to provide **a team-based framework that includes the social service workforce to facilitate effective coordination of services and interventions.**³⁴

The readiness of school systems to adjust – as well as the necessary levels of resourcing and buy-in from ministries – will vary greatly. Recognizing that sustainable change takes time can help set realistic targets.³⁵

A national education policy on child protection in education settings should include the following key elements:³⁶

- 1. Roles and responsibilities of the ministry of education and school staff:** delineating the obligations that the ministry has in ensuring that department and school staff are supported in preventing and responding to child protection concerns.
- 2. Mechanisms for child participation** while designing, and later monitoring, these national and local policies.
- 3. Recruitment of the social service workforce to be employed within schools based on a clear scope of services,** which social welfare departments and school administrators should jointly agree and support, and students and families should know they can expect.

4. **Recruitment, training and support in fulfilling their child protection responsibilities for teachers and other school staff:** including through staff background and reference checks, pre-service training, training, supervision and support (see section IV for more information on support to teachers).
5. **Risk identification and management:** delineating guidance and training on how to identify, mitigate and manage protection risks, including within classroom settings, during sports, play, recreation and after-school activities, and on excursions or other school-led activities outside school premises. It is important to also include overall child safeguarding guidelines in the national education policy.
6. **Specific procedures for mandatory reporting and responding to child protection concerns reported to or identified by a school,** including a) internal procedures for reporting and recording staff misconduct towards students and other incidents of concern occurring on school grounds, and b) procedures to report, refer and follow-up on child abuse and neglect and other child protection concerns with the relevant local authorities.
7. **Providing support to students where child protection concerns have been identified:** detailing guidance for school staff, including teachers and school social service workers, on how they can, for example, support student victims of abuse.
8. **Ensuring management and monitoring structures,** including designated staff and budget lines, to ensure national and local policies are supported in their development and implementation. This may include integration of the education system with child protection case management systems to facilitate easier follow-up and management of cases (if this is implemented, it is critical to ensure effective confidentiality and data protection systems in information management).
9. **Creating and funding evaluative processes** to track and build on incremental steps to strengthen the social service workforce and wider child protection capacity of schools.

Although common elements of integrated policy can be recommended, it is also important to consider the unique and innumerable variations in context that would affect how such policies can be applied in practice. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to ensure safe and successful schools. To be most effective, schools – with ministry of education support and working together with other relevant authorities and services – need to assess existing resources and structures to determine what additional support is needed. Schools should provide interventions that are most appropriate and culturally sensitive to their unique student populations.³⁷ It is essential to develop policies and interventions in partnership with children, families and communities.³⁸



Georgia³⁹

In June 2018, the Parliament of Georgia adopted a new 'Law on Social Work' which created opportunities to improve social work and the numbers of social workers across Georgia, including their introduction in schools. The 'Social Work Concept and Standards in the Education System' have been approved by the Ministerial Order, and the roles and responsibilities of the social workers in the education system have been approved and adopted. Social work is thus being progressively institutionalized in the education system.



UNICEF Child Friendly Schools initiative⁴⁰

The UNICEF Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) initiative has helped raise awareness of child protection within educational settings, including that action should go beyond addressing the physical environment to improving safety and security.

The CFS framework promotes educational settings that are characterized as “inclusive, healthy, and protective of all children” in an environment that is “physically safe, emotionally secure and psychologically enabling.” It also stresses that schools should “defend and protect all children from abuse and harm.” The CFS framework helps education ministries in a variety of country contexts to make significant progress in rendering schools more child-centred, safe, friendly and community responsive. However, it is often acknowledged by UNICEF that the ‘protective’ dimension of the framework is often the weakest, with many schools focusing on the less sensitive area of child safety from accidental injury, rather than protection from forms of child maltreatment.

5 If trained and supported, teachers and school administrators can address child protection issues, but they will usually have limited time and capacity. Social service workers in schools can effectively address child protection issues as they arise and connect interventions at school with the wider child protection system and services.

Education authorities should effectively recruit, train, support and monitor teachers to ensure successful child protection responses,⁴¹ including through:

- Adoption of child protection screening procedures for recruitment of teachers. These should include police checks, verbal and written reference checks, interview questions, signing of the school’s child protection code of conduct and performance reviews that consider staff suitability and relationships with students.
- Mandatory pre-service training for teachers on child protection in general, including the development of greater awareness and understanding of child abuse and neglect, its common contributing factors, immediate and

long-term impacts and child protection referral mechanisms.

- Teacher training on classroom management and positive discipline, without use of physical or verbal violence (including corporal punishment, or verbally or emotionally abusing students).⁴² In countries where corporal punishment in schools is not yet fully prohibited,⁴³ education authorities should work with child protection services to put in place the required steps to prepare for legal reform to prohibit it, while international organizations and child rights advocates continue to advocate for such legal reforms.
- A child protection mandate as part of staff orientation and as part of supervision and mentoring during newly recruited teachers’ probationary periods.
- Specific training to ensure teachers can recognize signs and symptoms of child abuse, neglect or exploitation and make appropriate reports and referrals in line with procedures established by the child protection policy.
- In low-resource settings, ensure at least one teacher in each school is trained and supported, and has sufficient authority, to act as a child protection focal point. This would include identifying child protection concerns, liaising with designated social service workers and making and following up on appropriate referrals to external agencies.

Teacher training and support is therefore a central component for implementing effective child protection within schools,⁴⁴ and such support and training is also required for other staff in education settings.⁴⁵ Teachers and school administrators are often largely responsible for reporting abuse and violence but, without training, are unable to recognize signs and symptoms of such abuse.⁴⁶ Studies have shown that teachers in different contexts tend to under-report child abuse due to lack of knowledge about the signs and symptoms of abuse, unclear reporting procedures and fear of making inaccurate reports.⁴⁷ **Social service workers have an important role in providing this training and support for education staff to enable them recognize and appropriately respond to common indicators of abuse and neglect.**



India⁴⁸

A comprehensive school health programme was launched in 2018 to promote mental health, nutrition and prevention of violence in schools for more than 220 million children in 2.6 million secondary schools in India. This has included the design of a teacher training curriculum that integrates elements of personal safety education to prevent sexual abuse, peer-to-peer violence and corporal punishment in schools. Under the programme, a cadre of school counsellors was developed to provide psychosocial support to children, facilitated by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences.



Heads of schools can also play a critical role by building consensus based on a vision that reflects the core values of the school community to support student safety and well-being; valuing and using diversity to enhance the learning of the entire school community; broadening the framework for child development beyond academics; and developing a learning culture that is adaptive, collaborative, innovative and supportive by considering the contributions of every member of the school staff.⁴⁹

However, it is also critical to recognize that, **while teachers and school administrators usually have primary responsibility for reporting child protection concerns, in many countries they do not have the training and support, or time and competence, to recognize signs and symptoms of abuse or violence, to record concerns and to make referrals appropriately, safely and promptly.**

This is especially the case in the referral and follow-up of child protection cases (including effective coordination of services and interventions). Working together with external agencies is challenging for teachers and school administrators, especially if they lack the resources, time, mandate and capacity, to effectively follow-up on child protection concerns when making external referrals and collaborating with

other agencies (a role the social service workforce is well placed to carry out). This is made even more challenging when the child protection services that teachers and school administrators are trying to report to, and coordinate with, are under-staffed and under-resourced. The responsibility to promote child well-being and child protection should therefore be shared with on-site support staff, such as social service workers, where available.



Cambodia⁵⁰

Teachers and school directors in Cambodia are provided training on positive discipline and effective classroom management, while a new credit-based blended online training course on positive discipline and classroom management is being integrated into in-service teacher training and the curriculum of teacher training institutions. Both methods of capacity building include integrated material on mental health, gender equality and the child protection referral pathway, ensuring teachers have the skills to identify children in need of specialized support as well as the knowledge of how to refer them to receive this support from well-trained and professionally qualified social workers.

6

The social service workforce should be integrated into schools and education systems

The key role of the social service workforce needs to be recognized by ministries of education, and they should work together with ministries of social welfare to ensure the integration of the workforce within education structures. In many instances, education staff underestimate or are unaware of the important role of the social service workforce.⁵¹ Education actors need to recognize the role of the social service workforce, and the fulfilment of their wider child protection responsibilities, as not only important in themselves but a means to help school systems meet educational outcomes. The underlying premise of child protection in schools is that it not only upholds children's rights to protection from abuse and violence but supports students' academic progress by removing or reducing barriers to learning, by ensuring that students' basic physical, mental health and psychosocial needs are met first.⁵²

Social service workers both located in and working closely with schools – when appropriately capacitated, resourced and supported – can effectively address child protection concerns facing students – including all forms of violence – and can support students' overall mental health, psychosocial well-being and holistic development. In many countries where such provision is well resourced, social service workers work in and with schools using an interdisciplinary team approach, and serve as liaisons between the school and community. Social service workers in these settings provide critical guidance on school policies, including those policies on discipline, crisis response, interventions for mental health and larger support services. They also often participate in the assessment of students who have been referred for special education services, to address special educational needs, and to help consider the student's family and social context in doing so.⁵³

Social service workers who work in close partnership with teachers and school administrators can also identify children and families in need of longer-term support, and assess and make referrals to resources that are available to these students and families outside of school, as well as identify and allocate

resources that can be utilized through the school itself. Additionally, they can provide information on at-risk students, including students who may be at risk of violence or neglect in the home or community, or of risky or challenging behaviour such as substance abuse. Social service workers can then advise teachers and other school staff on how to address and monitor these risks over time.⁵⁴



Ecuador⁵⁵

Created in 2016, the “Departamentos de Consejería Estudiantil”, or DECE, in Ecuador work within educational institutions to ensure the protection and well-being of students. DECEs are composed of interdisciplinary teams that include psychologists and social workers with an average ratio of one staff person for every 450 students. DECE staff responsibilities include referrals and follow-up for students affected by violence within the school and/or community.



The exact role and focus of social service workers who work in school settings depends, however, on their type and level of professional training, the grade level of students served, the average caseload of social service workers, school district size, and the type, range and prevalence of child protection concerns within the community.⁵⁶ The efficiency and effectiveness of the social service workforce will also depend on the availability and quality of child protection services available in the community to coordinate with, and the quality of the referral system for connecting students and their families with those services when needed.

Depending on context and resources, how social service workers are deployed to support schools can also vary, with some being school-based, others community-based but linked to either one school or a small cluster of schools, which they regularly visit. The challenge, whichever model is adopted, is not to overstretch the social service workforce to the point where attempted interventions in support of students in school are ineffective, owing to lack of time for assessment, coordination and follow-up.

It is also important to be clear on the scope and limits of services that social service workers in

schools can provide, that school directors and administrators should support, and that students and families can expect.⁵⁷ Realistic job descriptions, monitoring of working conditions and caseloads, continuing training and professional development, regular supervision and support for staff well-being are essential for effective social service workforce practice in schools.⁵⁸ Regular reviews of goals, objectives, accomplishments and accountability procedures of social service workforce in schools are also necessary.

Adequate support for social service workers is particularly important as they risk becoming isolated working in schools, in an environment focused primarily on educational goals, if the culture, values and priorities of the school do not recognize the child protection needs of students, or offer clear, regular and open communication with parents, caregivers and families and outreach to communities.⁵⁹ To minimize this risk, it can be helpful to designate a key individual responsible for liaison and coordination with the social service workforce, within the management of a school or school district. This can help promote appropriate recognition, support and accountability for this role.⁶⁰



Mongolia⁶¹

In Mongolia, a provision specifically for school social work was included in the 'Law on Child Protection' when it was amended in 2003. The ministry of education produced a job description for school social workers, assigning them a range of duties that include policy development, provision of parenting education, assessment and referrals, counselling, response to domestic violence allegations and more general family welfare tasks. School social workers are appointed by school directors, who are responsible for managing their day-to-day duties.



Types of social service workers in schools

School social workers⁶²

School social work is a growing specialty around the world. There are school social workers practising in over 50 countries. A variety of models for school social work are used, each having its advantages. For example, in the United States, Sweden and Finland, social work services are generally seen as an integral part of school staff and social workers are typically part of a multidisciplinary school team. In some countries, such as Hong Kong, the service is provided through non-governmental organizations, while in others such as Germany, school social work is provided through a collaboration between youth welfare agencies and the school system.

Where established schools social work programs exist, the most common educational requirements are a bachelor's or master's degree in social work, or in social pedagogy. Social pedagogy is an academic and professional discipline that seeks to bring about individual and social change mostly through educational means, using a strengths-based, person-centred approach. It therefore closely aligns with a school social work role, but it is not a discipline or model known worldwide, and is taught and practised largely in continental Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union.

Ensuring that school social work becomes institutionalized with appropriate standards requires training, professional standards, a professional association that can accurately represent the field, certification and ideally legislation that validates the role of social work in schools.

School-based counsellors⁶³

School-based counselling is well established in 62 countries and mandatory in 39. While the school-based counsellor role initially supported students' academic and career development, there is now increasing focus on supporting students' mental health and well-being. Counselling is typically delivered by experienced teachers with an additional postgraduate qualification, and sometimes by specialist social workers or psychologists. Meeting the full continuum of student needs also requires collaboration between school counsellors and community mental health providers and social workers.

Para professional staff⁶⁴

In contexts where there are few, if any, formal professional development programs for the social service workforce (as in the case in most low- and middle-income countries), para professional training, for staff or community volunteers who are not professionally qualified in social work, social pedagogy, counseling or psychology, is one option to build capacity in some level of social work practice in schools. For example, the 'barefoot social worker model' introduced in China in 2010, trains and supports local community members with a basic level of education and knowledge of social work and child protection to deliver child welfare services.



Jordan⁶⁵

The role of the school counsellor in Jordan includes running mental health programs for children and providing follow-up for cases of children found to be particularly at risk.

Training programs for school counsellors include topics related to psychosocial support, improving school welfare, school violence and other specialized topics. If the school is without a counsellor, technical support is provided by the educational counselling department to address cases of children that need intervention programs.



7 Social service workers can provide promotive, preventive and responsive services, which are the components of a multi-tiered child protection response system that includes schools

Such multi-tier approaches to child protection services in schools can effectively address a wide range of needs among school students.⁶⁶ Such approaches include a continuum of services ranging from **promoting** awareness of key issues and ways to address them, to **preventive** supports for all students, which are part of an overall school environment that supports student safety and mental health, to more intensive and specialized support in the form of **responsive** services for at-risk and directly affected students.⁶⁷ Social service workers in schools can play a critical role across all of these roles.⁶⁸

PROMOTIVE SERVICES

The social service workforce plays a key role in promoting the work they do at a wider level, raising awareness of the issues they address in the community and nationwide, building partnerships with children and families, schools, community groups and formal structures, and advocating for better recognition and resources for their work. All these activities are also relevant and important in the work of the social service workforce in schools.

PREVENTIVE SERVICES

Primary prevention activities by the social service workforce in schools include different steps to help establish an overall protective climate and culture in schools that is safe, non-violent and inclusive, and enables identification of risks as early as possible, and quick access to help for those who need it. Prevention also includes raising awareness and providing information to families, schools and the wider community on key child protection concerns, on available resources to prevent and address them, and referral pathways to access those resources. This requires the development and implementation of national and local-level policies on child protection in educational settings, by education ministries, school districts and school staff, that emphasize planning for prevention and risk mitigation.⁶⁹ In these efforts, both teachers and school administrators (as described in section IV) can play a critical role,

through promoting the psychosocial and mental health well-being of all students. Meanwhile, social service workers not only provide specialist responsive services, but support the preventive approach through training of school staff and helping schools implement national child protection policies.



United Arab Emirates⁷⁰

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), all public schools have assigned social workers, at two levels: a social worker handles promotive and preventative work and manages 'low-risk' issues, while 'high-risk' issues are referred to a child protection specialist who has the legal authority to visit homes and intervene to protect a child from imminent danger. In 2020, UAE introduced case management procedures for social workers affiliated with schools and is now harmonizing those procedures with the health sector, which also has a child protection unit and social workers. During the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF worked closely with the school-based social workers to reach out to and monitor children's safety remotely.

RESPONSIVE SERVICES

- Focused non-specialized support**
 Some students, although not in need of specialized support, will still need more attention than others. Similarly, students with additional needs or vulnerability, such as children in alternative care (not growing up in the care of their family) or children with disabilities, may need to have their needs assessed and regularly monitored.⁷¹ Social service workers in schools are well placed to do so. This may also include providing individual or small group interventions focused on reducing child protection risks by improving attendance, and supporting learning and overall social-emotional engagement. These interventions can also help students develop conflict resolution and social skills, and support their mental health needs. They can also address short-term crisis situations that do not require more intensive interventions.⁷²



Bhutan⁷³

The ministry of education in Bhutan builds the capacity of school counsellors that are present in central schools and high schools by equipping them with the knowledge and skills to prevent, recognize and respond to violence against children. Efforts are also being made to integrate child protection in residential schools, monasteries and nunneries where children live and learn, to ensure that children who are particularly vulnerable, because they are living outside of parental care, are not overlooked.

■ Specialized support

Social service workers also need to be ready and able to support students facing more serious child protection concerns. Such interventions, for the most vulnerable and at risk students, generally involve intensive individualized strategies that are implemented for extended periods of time and frequently involve community agencies.⁷⁴ Teachers also play a key role in addressing the needs of such students through learning how to recognise signs and symptoms of different types of abuse and neglect in children, and how to refer them to social service workers for follow-up, initial response and referral, and if required, to external services.⁷⁵

8

Effective child protection in schools is underpinned by multi-stakeholder engagement and a holistic approach

At every level, effective child protection in schools, relies on certain key underlying elements, in particular **effective multi-stakeholder engagement**, and **holistic** approaches informed by an **ecological** approach.

Effective multi-stakeholder engagement

strategies include:

- tailored interventions for diverse student, family and community populations;

- active participation of all stakeholders, including in ongoing training;
- consistent and clear messaging on what constitutes child protection and what child protection responsibilities entail in different roles, whether that of teacher, social service worker, parent or student.⁷⁶

In the social context of creating safe schools for students, social service workers play a crucial role and link in developing and enabling successful interventions. Social service workers can partner with and facilitate cooperation among students, parents, community members, administration, teachers and other school personnel to develop effective and sustainable interventions.⁷⁷

Social service workers should engage all key players in students' lives to help **"wrap children in protection."**⁷⁸ Key actors include education staff, other students, families and communities. Social service workers can serve as the link between the student, the student's family, the school and the community. The effectiveness of this connection depends significantly on the social service worker's relationships with the student, the family of the student and other school staff. Social service workers cannot successfully support students in isolation, nor can they fully realize the tenet of participation that is key for a rights-based approach.

Trust is an essential element in building and maintaining these multi-stakeholder relationships to protect students.⁷⁹ These include relationships between social service workers, teachers, school leaders, students, parents and community members.⁸⁰ Trusting relationships between students and staff enable and promote students' engagement, well-being and identification with their school.⁸¹ These trusting relationships enable students to feel safe when sharing their needs and fears with school staff.⁸² This ensures that their needs can be identified early and support and interventions provided when and where needed.⁸³ Such trust is the basis for an overall positive school climate, in which students feel safe, supported and connected at school, which supports students' motivation for and engagement in learning and improves staff engagement in teaching.

The feeling of being safe and supported is even more important for students experiencing trauma.⁸⁴

This kind of multi-stakeholder, collaborative approach also requires, and assumes, that social service workers in schools can adopt **a holistic, ecological perspective to understanding and addressing students' needs**. An ecological perspective places child protection in schools in the context of larger systems interacting at multiple levels: students, their family, school, community and wider society.⁸⁵ This approach enables the development of positive, safe and trusting relationships and supportive connections at all these levels, which will need to be adapted to the specific context. For example, in primary schools the focus is on the student, first in the context of the family and then in the context of the community. This will need to shift in secondary school settings to a greater focus on student-to-student interactions, while still taking into account the influence and role of the family, community and wider society.⁸⁶

Engaging students⁸⁷

A multi-stakeholder engagement approach starts with students, and with schools actively engaging students as resources rather than as passive objects, for example as peer supporters in work to prevent and address bullying. This results in students feeling connected and committed to the wider school community, and feeling that they have a stake in both setting and upholding the school's rules. This approach often involves social service workers who work with students individually and in group settings to help develop their social skills and understand the short- and long-term impacts on others of behaviors, such as bullying. It also involves more interactive, student-centred modes of teaching (using techniques such as modeling, rehearsal and reinforcement), than traditional didactic approaches, as these are found to be more effective in supporting both academic achievement and social skills. At the same time, however, such approaches need to recognize the limits of a student's autonomy and avoid placing expectations for which students should not be held responsible on their own. For example, expecting students to apply a simple 'just say no' rule in relation to risky behaviours such as drug taking might not reflect their actual level of autonomy or dependency, and might not be sufficient to support every student's needs.

9 Social service workers can support referral to external agencies and engage with families and communities, thus it is important to ensure robust referral and outreach mechanisms are in place

There are many duty bearers in the community, and in different sectors of local services, responsible for preventing and responding to violence in and through schools.⁸⁸ Collaboration among and between school staff and community-based service providers helps integrate wider child protection initiatives into the school, and ensure an overall safe school learning environment.⁸⁹ The required cooperation includes management systems at national and district levels, as well as within schools.⁹⁰ Such collaboration relies on a functioning and well-communicated referral mechanism,⁹¹ which brings together existing referral services and pathways to link schools to services, with the role of schools being that of identification and referral for specialized child protection services.⁹²

However, working together with external referral systems and agencies is particularly challenging for teachers and school administrators when, as is the case in many countries, they lack the resources, time and capacity to effectively follow-up on child protection concerns following referral to external agencies. Child protection authorities should ensure that the social service workforce understand and can access referral systems. This will enable them to play their essential and crucial role of facilitating effective coordination of services and interventions, and ensuring that appropriate referrals from school are made and followed-up with the relevant child protection staff in the designated local authority. Social service workers also need to play a liaison or accompaniment role with students, families and school staff.

Schools should also engage families and communities as meaningful partners. Families and communities play a fundamental role in child protection and are likely best equipped to do so.⁹³ Positive family involvement in students' schooling not only underpins academic achievement, it is also associated with lower levels of antisocial activities.⁹⁴ Students also feel safer when they see a positive partnership between their family, school and community.⁹⁵

Focus on students with particular vulnerabilities or disabilities⁹⁶

Students with vulnerabilities or disabilities are at greater child protection risks. This includes children with intellectual or physical disabilities; children with educational special needs; children separated from their families or caregivers, and children living in dormitories and residential schools. The necessity of being attuned to the needs and circumstances of children with such vulnerabilities or disabilities should be reflected in localized policies and the training of school staff.

10

There is a need to advocate for the effective development and professionalization of the social service workforce in schools

A majority of low- and middle-income countries currently lack programmes for involvement of social service workforce in schools, but the community-

based, holistic and strength-based approaches of social service workers make them uniquely suited to address the many complex and compounding factors that contribute to student well-being, in and outside of schools.

There is therefore a need to advocate for the school social service workforce to become institutionalized with appropriate training, professional standards, licensing and certification, legislation that defines and mandates the role of the social service workforce in schools, and the support of professional associations.

Capacity building for teachers, school administrators and social service workers should cover their role in child protection including identification, referrals, coordination, monitoring and response to child protection concerns.



ANNEXES

1 Violence against children in schools

“For child victims of violence, school can become an ordeal rather than an opportunity. The promise and potential of education and the excitement of discovery and learning are undermined by pain, trauma and fear. In some cases, children’s academic performance suffers, their health and well-being are affected, and their capacity to operate as confident individuals, capable of developing open and trusting relations with others, is compromised. The negative impact of violence in schools goes beyond the children who are directly affected by it. It touches the lives of those who witness it, creating an atmosphere of anxiety and insecurity incompatible with learning. And violence or the threat of violence can even be such that families feel pressed to keep their children out of school, and to encourage school abandonment as a means of preventing further violence and harm. As a result, educational opportunity, with all its benefits for the individual and society, may be seriously hampered.”⁹⁷

Diverse forms of violence connected to schools include:⁹⁸

- Violence perpetrated by teachers and other school staff, including corporal punishment, cruel and humiliating forms of psychological punishment, sexual exploitation and abuse, and bullying.
- Violence that takes place between peers in and around schools, such as bullying, sexual and gender-based violence, and physical and psychological violence; these forms of violence may also have an online dimension, which may include sexual exploitation and abuse, cyberbullying and digital harassment.
- Violence in a home and family setting; insofar as teachers and other school staff are typically

the first point of contact with children outside of their families, they also have a professional duty to identify warning signs and respond where indications of violence or abuse are apparent.

- Violence in the community that has an impact on schools. This includes violence associated with gang culture and armed violence in non-conflict settings.
- Attacks on schools, understood as any intentional threat or use of force carried out for political, military, ideological, sectarian, ethnic, religious, or criminal reasons against students, educators and education institutions.





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2

Key social service workforce values

Social service workers should “demonstrate core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity and competence.”⁹⁹ Key values to be applied in schools include:¹⁰⁰

- recognition of the worth and dignity of each student;
- the right to self-determination or self-realization;
- respect for individual potential and support for a student’s aspirations to attain it; and
- the right of each student to be different from every other and to be accorded respect for those differences.

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

A rights-based approach is based on the principles of participation and **empowering individuals and communities** to promote change and enable them to exercise their rights and comply with their duties.¹⁰¹ Key principles encapsulated by rights-based standards and norms, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, include universality, non-discrimination and the indivisibility and interdependence of human rights.¹⁰² A rights-based approach builds and strengthens the capabilities and autonomy of individuals and communities, and promotes accountability of leadership structures, agencies and States.¹⁰³

STRENGTH-BASED APPROACH

A strength-based approach recognizes existing capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential within communities and individuals. Focusing on strengths does not mean ignoring challenges or spinning struggles into strengths,¹⁰⁴ but rather choosing to make existing strengths, rather than deficits, the focus of an intervention.

A strength-based approach identifies structures and approaches already in place and builds on those, expanding in culturally sensitive and collaborative manners. A strength-based approach can improve social networks and enhance well-being by starting from a position of strength and recognition of existing assets and capacity within communities and individuals. A strength-based approach emphasizes community and individual self-determination and strengths. It is essential to analyse the different “realities people face because of their **age**, their **gender** and their **diversity**, which relate to ethnicity, religion, disability and sexual orientation, among other factors.”¹⁰⁵

ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

An ecological perspective that considers the key areas of a student’s life (school, family and community) is crucial.¹⁰⁶ Social service workers encounter students in the context of larger systems, such as families and communities, and can be uniquely qualified to facilitate the development of relationships among individuals, families and communities.¹⁰⁷

3

A global picture of school social work¹⁰⁸

School social work is a growing specialty around the world. There are school social workers practising in over 50 countries.¹⁰⁹

A variety of models for school social work are used, each having its advantages. For example, in the United States, Sweden and Finland, social work services are an integral part of the school staff and practitioners are typically part of a multidisciplinary school team. In some countries, such as Hong Kong, the service is provided through non-governmental organizations, while in others such as Germany, school social work is a collaboration between youth welfare agencies and the school system.

School social work was introduced at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century as part of the universal education movement in several countries. The initial role of attendance officer evolved into a social work role. For example, in the United Kingdom, school attendance officers were recruited in the late nineteenth century as an enforcement service (Blyth & Cooper, 2002). The role developed into the present position of education welfare officer in which attendance work is still a major function.

School social work services are provided to some degree in the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Curacao, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region of China), Hungary, Iceland, India, Jamaica, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Mauritius, Mongolia, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Trinidad/Tobago, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Vietnam.

There is little information about services to children in schools in many parts of the world, including much of Africa, Asia, Central and South America and the Mediterranean. There is interest in developing school social work in some of these areas, as seen in articles published regarding the need in Sierra Leone (Bulanda & Sulaiman, 2017), Turkey (Yeşilkayali & Meydan, 2017). Jordan Alhajjaj (2017) and Uganda (Omona, 2018).

A major role for school social work in countries where widespread poverty and the accompanying child labour contributes to under-enrolment in school is to support Education for All targets by reaching out to families to enrol children, providing for basic needs such as school meals and maintaining school attendance.

SELECT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY¹¹⁰

Below are key resources categorized by 1) countries and regions, 2) policies and guidelines, 3) networks and 4) organizational resources.

1 Countries and regions

Asio, John Mark R., Shallimar A. Bayucca, and Edward C. Jimenez. 2020. 'Child Protection Policy Awareness of Teachers and Responsiveness of the School: Their relationship and implications.' *International Journal of Education* 9(1): 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v9i1.3384>.

Survey of 46 teachers from seven different schools in Bulacan, Philippines assessing the awareness of teachers surrounding the country's child protection policy (affirmative, in part to avoid being reprimanded in the event of an incident) and the responsiveness of schools (moderately implemented). The study asserts a moderate and direct relationship between the awareness of teachers and the responsiveness of the school: teacher awareness drives school compliance. However, researchers also cite conflicting literature, which points to a lack of agreement between the head of a school and its teachers in terms of the school's roles and responsibilities in implementing child protection policy.

Beddoe, Liz, Irene de Haan, and Eileen Joy. 2018. 'If You Could Change Two Things': Social workers in schools talk about what could improve schools' responses to child abuse and neglect.' *Aotearoa New Zealand Social Work* 30(1): 45-57. <https://doi.org/10.11157/anzswj-vol30iss1id420>.

Qualitative study of school-based social workers' insights into ways schools in Aotearoa New Zealand can enhance their responses to child abuse and neglect. Primary interview response categories: (1) improved child abuse training to allow teachers to view themselves as a key part of the child protection

process; (2) better support for teachers including social workers having more time to work with teachers and offer consultation; (3) a more holistic view of child welfare that supports a child-centred approach; and (4) improved relationships between teachers/schools with statutory child protection. Researcher also includes a review of relevant literature including contrasting the New Zealand view of schools as a site for social work intervention in contrast to the United States of America where school social workers are seen as working for the school, rather than independently serving the students and their families. Other literature findings include misunderstanding the work of school social workers and lack of agreement about the role.

Burr, Rachel and Franziska Fay. 2019. 'Child Protection Across Worlds: Young people's challenges within and outside of child protection programmes in UK and Zanzibar schools.' In *Global Childhoods Beyond the North-South Divide*, edited by Afua Twum-Danso Imoh, Michael Bourdillon, and Sylvia Meichsner, pp. 187-205. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-95543-8_10.

Comparison of case studies from the UK and Zanzibar comparing school-led child protection programmes, their successes, and their challenges. Findings show major gaps in both areas in the ability for school-based interventions to improve experiences at home. Both also point to a shortfall in intervention design: mostly adult-led, generic, not speaking to the holistic needs of individual children. UK case study focuses on a student-led meditation programme, which has shown evidence in providing young people tools for self-expression and resilience-building. Zanzibar case

study looks at an alternative to corporal punishment (which remains sanctioned in Zanzibar with no full legal prohibition) which was shown to have simply led to new risks, complications at home and mistrust of students. Article provides background on the difference in school models functioning in the two locations (including funding streams, level of independence) and the recent history of child protection in schools in both to offer context for the case study findings.

Buckleya, Helen and Kathryn McGarry. 2011. 'Child Protection in Primary Schools: A contradiction in terms or a potential opportunity?' *Irish Educational Studies* 30(1): 113-128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03323315.2011.535979>.

Questionnaire survey conducted with 103 teachers from Irish primary schools to evaluate their awareness of the child protection roles and responsibilities of schools (the paper defines 'child protection' to mean actions taken in response to suspicions or disclosures of the physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of children): teachers' awareness of their schools children protection policies, if there was a designated liaison person with responsibility for child protection in their school, and confidence in regards to identifying suspected child abuse all proved very weak.

Crooks, Claire V., et al. 2020. 'The STRONG Resiliency Program for Newcomer Youth: A mixed-methods exploration of youth experiences and impacts.' *International Journal of School Social Work* 5(2): 24. <https://doi.org/10.4148/2161-4148.1059>.

Description of (and findings about the use of) STRONG, a ten-session strengths-based resilience intervention that promotes relaxation skills, healthy coping, communication and problem-solving, as well as facilitating youth sharing their journey narrative. Both qualitative and quantitative evidence shows that the STRONG programme was highly impactful in enhancing newcomer students' resiliency and coping skills and providing a positive sense of self and belonging in this study.

Daftary, Ashley-Marie Hanna. 2020. 'Prioritizing School Social Workers' Roles and Responsibilities to Combat Oppression in K-12 Schools: Perspectives

from educators with anti-oppressive orientations.' *International Journal of School Social Work* 5(2): 16. <https://doi.org/10.4148/2161-4148.1072>.

Qualitative study of U.S. educators to investigate anti-oppressive practices in K-12 education, with insight into various ways school social workers can combat oppression in K-12 schools. "Findings suggest that school social workers should consider prioritizing the following activities to combat oppression in schools: 1) provide leadership in social justice work and anti-oppressive practice; 2) increase visibility and integration on campus and in the classroom; and 3) complement student interventions with psycho-education and social-emotional support for teachers."

Goldman, Juliette D. G. and Peter Grimbeek. 2015. 'Preservice Teachers' Sources of Information on Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse.' *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* 24(3): 238-258. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2015.1009607>.

Study aiming to audit student teachers' knowledge about abuse and neglect, the role as mandatory reporters, and if relevant, sources of information for their knowledge – questionnaire undertaken at a large urban university in Australia with Bachelor of Education (primary) student teachers prior to their being registered to teach in state, Catholic, other-denomination or private primary schools. Findings showed a significant dearth of knowledge and instructive learning, and for many the main source of info was media (web, tv, radio). Article also includes a literary review of previous research, Australian protocols for teachers and some relevant teacher training modules.

Harris, Belinda. 2013. *International School-Based Counselling: A scoping report*. Lutterworth, UK: British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. <https://www.bacp.co.uk/media/2050/counselling-minded-international-school-based-counselling-harris.pdf>.

Report presenting findings of a scoping of state-funded school-based counselling services for children and young people in 90 countries, to provide a global overview of the status and prevalence of school-based counselling around the world.

Huxtable, Marion. 2021 (in press). 'A Global Picture of School Social Work in 2021.' *International Journal of School Social Work*.

The article describes the status of school social work in 2021 using data gathered by the International Network for School Social Work. School social work is a growing specialty around the world. There are school social workers practising in over 50 countries. School social workers support student's educational success, especially those who are marginalized by poverty, oppression, disability and other personal or social problems. Ideally school social workers practice within a multi-disciplinary team to address wide-ranging barriers to education and participate in preventive programmes for all students. The article describes the growth of school social work around the world, various models of practice, the role of specialty professional associations, training and standards, and the growth of school social work literature. Changes in the role and practice of school social work since the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020/2021 are included. International communication among school social workers has grown via publications, conferences and the International Network for School Social Work, and continues to assist expansion of the specialty around the world. Implications for the future of social work in education are discussed, a list of national school social work associations is provided, and references include literature on school social work from various countries.

Jones, Camilla. 2016. *Schools That Care: A review of linkages between children's education and care*. Sterling, VA: Family for Every Child. <https://www.familyforeverychild.org/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=0dfc2121-fcf-4449-a816-6e59ee6c0a44>.

Report of findings of a scoping study on the links between education and children's care, with recommendations for more effective linkages and collaboration between the education, child protection and care sectors.

Lacoe, Johanna. 2020. 'Too Scared to Learn? The academic consequences of feeling unsafe in the classroom.' *Urban Education* 55(10): 1385–1418. <https://doi/10.1177/0042085916674059>.

Survey conducted by the New York City Department of Education of middle schoolers from 700 public schools. Based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, survey aimed to explore how feeling unsafe in the classroom affects student academic performance. Findings showed that students who reported feeling unsafe in the classroom had higher mean absences and lower scores on the math and English language arts standardized tests. Feeling unsafe in the classroom was also correlated with reported feelings of safety in other areas of the school. A review of relevant literature is included in the article.

Namdaldagva, Oyuterdene, Sugarmaa Myagmarjav, and Denise Burnette. 2010. 'Professional Social Work Education in Mongolia: Achievements, lessons learned, and future directions.' *Social Work Education* 29(8): 882–895. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2010.517017>.

Nordtveit, Bjorn Harald. 2010. 'Schools as Agencies of Protection in Namibia and Swaziland: Can they prevent dropout and child labor in the context of HIV/AIDS and poverty?' *Comparative Education Review* 38(2): 223-242. <https://doi.org/10.1086/651261>.

Case studies exploring school challenges and interventions in Namibia and Swaziland to prevent dropout. Case studies drew from communities chosen for high indicators of HIV/AIDS, poverty and child labour – and overall research is framed around the UNICEF model of Child-Friendly Schools. Positive interventions in Namibia have included life skills and empowerment trainings to students, although these have not necessarily been a priority for all headmasters/teachers. Challenges include engineering concerns in schools, ostracization based on uniforms and use of corporal punishment. Positive interventions in Swaziland have included free textbooks for all primary school pupils, special bursaries for orphaned and vulnerable children, and a 40-school pilot with UNICEF providing psychosocial support alongside basic health, sanitation and food services; ongoing challenges include the inability for schools to offer protection during holidays or prolonged teacher strikes.

Orkodashvili, Mariam. 2013. 'Quality Education through Child-Friendly Schools: Resource allocation for the protection of children's rights.' *Romanian Journal for Multidimensional Education* 5 (1): 101-109. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/2013.0501.07>.

Article providing information about UNICEF's framework of 'child-friendly schools' (CFS) with recommendations for the characteristics necessary to create a rights-based, child-friendly: inclusive, effective for learning, healthy and protective of children, gender-sensitive, involved with children-families-communities (for each aspect, article include several elucidating bullet points). Article includes two examples of UNICEF's role in implementing the framework in sub-Saharan African countries and regions: 1) Rwanda initiative including the construction and equipment of new classrooms, teacher training, water tank and work with Right to Play (international NGO) to promote sports for development; and 2) Mozambique: support of the ministry of education in creating CFS by emphasizing the importance of multiple sectors – education, health, water and sanitation, social welfare and communication – with a focus on improving student retention (particularly for girls and orphaned children) in the poorest communities.

Pretorius, Edmarie. 2020. 'A Collaborative Partnership Between School Social Workers and Educators: A vehicle to address the social contexts of learners and quality of education in South Africa.' *Social Work* 56(2): 139-156. <https://dx.doi.org/10.15270/52-2-817>

Safe to Learn, Safe to Learn Diagnostic Exercises in Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan and Uganda. Synthesis Report, Safe to Learn: New York, 2020.

The synthesis report presents an overview of the results from four diagnostic exercises conducted in Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan and Uganda from November 2019 to March 2020. The diagnostic exercises consisted of a document review of relevant laws and policies, as well as interviews with stakeholders at the national, district and school-level to assess the degree to which these laws and policies

are being implemented. The samples were not nationally representative, but they aimed to provide wide geographic coverage.

Safe to Learn, Diagnostic Study of National Efforts to Prevent and Respond to Violence in Schools in Jordan, Safe to Learn: New York, 2021.

This report presents results from a diagnostic exercise conducted in Jordan from July to November 2020 to gauge governments' compliance, identify best practices, gaps and priorities, and establish a baseline for tracking Jordan's progress. Key informant interviews were conducted with officials at the national and district levels, as well as with head teachers, teachers and students in 24 schools across all 12 governorates of Jordan: Irbid, Mafraq, Jarash, Ajloun, Balqa, Zarqa, Madaba, Amman, Aqaba, Karak, Tafileh and Maan. It should be noted that although the sample aimed to provide comprehensive geographic coverage, it is not nationally representative of Jordan. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting restrictions on fieldwork imposed by the Government of Jordan, information was collected through virtual sessions and phone interviews.

After the conclusion of the data collection activities and analysis of data, this report was developed to present best practices that were found, challenges and gaps that remain, and recommendations to support the government and education sector to meet Safe to Learn benchmarks to ensure that schools are safe environments that enhance learning for all children.

Scholes, Laura, et al. 2012. 'The Teachers' Role in Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs: Implications for teacher education.' *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* 37(11): 104-131. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2012v37n11.5>.

Systematic review (range of western countries – United Kingdom, United States of America, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia) designed to explore empirically-evidenced key considerations for effective child sexual abuse prevention programmes in schools. Review found five primary considerations for effective programmes: 1) the need to tailor the intervention for a diverse population, including

subgroups (can't rely on 'one size fits all' approach); 2) characteristics of effective programmes include: active participation, explicit training, integrated into school curriculum, repeated trainings, and multisystemic design including parental and teacher involvement; 3) consistent, clear messaging about what constitutes abuse/how to intervene, that reflect an understanding of what's within a child's autonomy ability (i.e. 'just say no' might not adequately reflect the level of dependency, awareness or strength of a child); 4) knowledge decay and gains call for repeat, ongoing trainings for relevant professionals; and 5) programme evaluation is currently lacking and must be a consideration in intervention design.

Sosa, Leticia Villarreal, and Nguyen Thu Ha. 2020. 'School Social Work in Vietnam: Development and capacity building through international collaboration.' *International Journal of School Social Work* 5(2): 14. <https://doi.org/10.4148/2161-4148.1065>.

Follows a project/collaboration funded by a Fulbright Specialist grant to support the development of social service workforce in Vietnam. Article also includes a brief overview of social work more largely in Vietnam, as well as specifics about school social work as it has been thus far – "not yet fully developed in Vietnam and is not largely present in the schools."

Vergottini, Marelize and Mike Weyers. 2020. 'The Foundations and Nature of South African School Social Work: An overview.' *Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk* 56(2): 124-138. <https://doi.org/10.15270/56-2-816>.

The article is intended to provide the background against which the current and future roles and functions of school social workers in South Africa may be judged. It covers the history and nature of South African school social work and the policy dictates that govern local practice, as well as the challenges faced by learners and the roles, tasks and functions practitioners could, and should, perform to address these. Moreover, the article represents an endeavour to provide the basis for the further development of this speciality within the local profession, as well as research in this field.

Wicki, Werner, et al. 2020. 'Tasks and Impact of School Social Work in Switzerland as Perceived by Teachers, Principals and School Social Workers – A multilevel analysis.' *International Journal of School Social Work* 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.4148/2161-4148.1052>.

Swiss study to explore perceptions of school-based professionals regarding the tasks and impact of school social work and to see if and how these perceptions converge or diverge.

United Nations Children's Fund. 2012. *Child Protection in Educational Settings: Findings from Six Countries in East Asia and the Pacific*, UNICEF EAPRO, Bangkok. <https://www.unicef.org/eap/reports/child-protection-educational-settings>.

Zamora, Karen L. and Dennis V. Madrigal. 2018. 'Child Protection Policy Compliance in a Catholic Educational Institution.' *ASEAN Journal of Education* 4(2): 22-34.

Mixed method study (questionnaire and semi-structured interviews) to examine the level of compliance with the Department of Education's Child Protection Policy within the Catholic educational institution in the Philippines. Respondents include school administration, teachers, non-teaching personnel (academic and other) and parents. Study finds full compliance overall, with a breakdown of compliance within particular areas – safety and security of the child reflect highest priority, while personnel training/development reflect lowest mean. Interviews deepen findings, with academic non-teaching personnel reporting that while there is full compliance, there are key implementation gaps (including personnel recruitment, information dissemination system and collaborative efforts). Recommendations include: 1) strengthened mentoring and supervision between admin; 2) training for teachers and non-teaching academic personnel; 3) student awareness of the process; and 4) parental awareness and encouragement to be active partners. Article also includes an overview of child protection in the Philippines and Asia and the Pacific regions more broadly, relevant Philippines's regulations and UN Human Rights rulings.

2 Policies & guidelines

Brooks, Jean E. 2006. 'Strengthening Resilience in Children and Youths: Maximizing opportunities through the schools.' *Children and Schools* 28(2): 69-76. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/28.2.69>.

Rationale for incorporating resilience-building into schools and recommended ways to do so. These include: utilizing curricula to develop social competence, increasing caring relationships within schools, communicating high expectations for all students (and affirming and supporting their work to realize them), maximizing opportunities for meaningful participation through cooperative learning strategies, strengthening school capacity (educator support systems, etc.) and partnering with families and communities (home visits, parent education sessions, in-home services). A description is also given for "full-service schools," which incorporate a variety of community agencies to maximize the availability of services (child care, employment and social skills training, health and mental health services, etc.). Policy and advocacy recommendations for social workers are outlined (with consideration for a larger social justice lens).

Cowan, Katherine C., Kelly Vaillancourt, Eric Rossen, and Kelly Pollitt. 2013. *A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools*. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists. www.nasponline.org/schoolsafetyframework.

Framework jointly created by the American School Counselor Association, National Association of School Psychologists, School Social Work Association of America, National Association of School Resource Officers, National Association of Elementary School Principals and National Association of Secondary School Principals. Includes policy recommendations to support school safety and best practices for creating safe schools.

Crosson-Tower, Cynthia. 2012. 'The Role of Educators in Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect.' *Child Abuse and Neglect User Manual Series*. Washington, DC:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/educator.pdf>.

Manual providing basis for the involvement of educators in combating child abuse and neglect – also may be used by a range of other professionals, including child protective services, mental health, law enforcement, health care and early childhood professionals. After an overview of the relevant federal statutes, legal concerns and professional responsibilities of educators, the manual offers information on recognizing abuse and neglect (including academic, familial and emotional/psychological clues), and how to talk to both children and parents about the issue. An outline of who, what and where to report is provided, as well as an overview of Child Protective Services services, and key things to consider when designing a school protocol. Manual contains information about different school-based prevention programmes (focused on life, socialization, problem-solving and coping skills training, as well as preparation for parenthood and self-protection). Overview of research on programme effectiveness. Case studies provided throughout manual.

End Violence for All. 2020. *Safe to Learn: Global programmatic framework and benchmarking tool*. https://www.end-violence.org/sites/default/files/paragraphs/download/STL%20Global%20Programmatic%20Framework_.pdf.

Tool created to provide guidance for translating the Safe the Learn "Call to Action" into practice, including highlighting technical resources and provides a suggested framework for monitoring.

End Violence Against Children. 'Safe to Learn: Call to action.' Accessed 21 July 2021. <https://www.end-violence.org/safetolearn/call>.

Call to Action statement with specific recommendations for national and sub-national governments, including: implement policy and legislation; strengthen prevention and response at school level; shift social norms and behaviour change; invest resources effectively; and generate and use evidence.

Henderson, Cynthia. 2019. *Violence and Bullying in Schools: Tips for Social Workers*. Washington, DC: The National Association of Social Work. <https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=5PBcpmVjdYk%3d&portalid=0>.

Resource from the National Association of Social Work in the United States of America outlining tips for social workers and students alike to respond to and help prevent violence and bullying within a school setting.

Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies. 2018 *Psychosocial Support: Facilitating psychosocial well-being and social emotional learning*. Guidance note. INEE: New York

International Association of Schools of Social Work. 2018. *Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles*. New York: IASSW. <https://www.iassw-aiets.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Global-Social-Work-Statement-of-Ethical-Principles-IASSW-27-April-2018-1.pdf>

International Association of Schools of Social Work principles for ethical practice, which subprinciples broken out for each overall standard.

National Association of Elementary School Principals. 2008. *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do, Second Edition*. Alexandria, VA: NAESP. <https://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/resources/1/Pdfs/LLC2-ES.pdf>.

National Association of Social Workers. 2012. *NASW Standards for School Social Work Services*. Washington, DC: NASW. <https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=1Ze4-9-Os7E%3D&portalid=0>.

National Association of Social Workers Standards for School Social Work as of 2021. Guiding principles behind the standards are education/school reform; social justice; and multi-tier interventions. Standards are intended to provide broad definition of the scope of services that school social workers shall provide, that school administrators should support, and that students and families should expect.

UK Department for Children, Schools, and Families. 2010. *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Schools*. London: DCSF. https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/11296/2/Safeguarding_Children_Guidance.pdf

Learning resources for school staff.

National Association of Social Workers. '8 Ethics Tips for Social Workers Who Practice in School Settings.' Washington, DC.

National Association of Social Workers resource with tips to guide solid ethical outcomes in school settings. Tips include: 1) obtain informed consent; 2) uphold privacy and confidentiality; 3) address mandated reporting and duty to warn responsibilities; 4) negotiate conflicts between school policy and social work ethics; 5) work with school admin to create policy regarding social media; 6) ensure appropriate handling of subpoenas with ethical, legal and procedural considerations; 7) avoid conflicts of interest; 8) ensure that documentation is accurate, timely and protects client privacy.

National Association of Social Workers. 2013. *Practice Perspectives. 'The School Social Worker in Crisis Situations: The Rights Skills, the Right Professional.'* Washington, DC. <https://www.socialworkers.org/assets/secured/documents/practice/schoolsocialworkerincrisis.pdf>

National Association of Social Workers resource outlining the role and need for school social workers, as well as some of the barriers to practice (financial deficits and restraints), as well as outlines adequate ratios. Resource outlines SSW role in responding to crisis settings, including helping administrators and teachers, training school staff on how to identify at-risk students, providing direct services to children and families and recognizing signs of crisis.

National Association of Social Workers. 'Schools Social Work Update: Addressing Bullying in Schools.' Washington, DC.

National Association of Social Workers resource with information about how bullying occurs – taking place

more and more online – and typical approaches to handling bullying, including more specific insights into what school social workers can do (decline the use of labels; approach students individually; provide training on warning signs; advocate for school staff-student connectedness).

National Association of Social Workers. 'Confidentiality and School Social Work.' Washington, DC.

National Association of Social Workers resource looking at confidentiality and SSW from a practice perspective. Explores the limits of confidentiality, legal and ethical concerns and practice implications.

National Association of Social Workers. 'The Social Context of Creating Safe Schools for Students.' Washington, DC.

National Association of Social Workers resource outlining characteristics of safe schools, and then highlighting the role of students, parents, families, schools and communities in realizing those characteristics, as well as the role of the media and entertainment industry, and that of local/state/federal government.

United Nations Children's Fund. 2019. *Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Service Workforce for Child Protection.* New York.

The Guidelines provide strategic and practical guidance on how to strengthen the social service workforce for UNICEF Senior Management, Programme Teams, as well as regional and national partners working in this field. At the country office level, these guidelines are of relevance for those engaged in strengthening the social service workforce across all sectors, especially for child protection programming.

United Nations Children's Fund. July 2021. *Child Protection Strategy 2021-2030.* New York.

The purpose of the Child Protection Strategy is to provide a clear vision and strategic framework for UNICEF's work in Child Protection for the decade to

2030, while allowing flexibility for this work to be led by country and regional contexts and local needs. The Strategy explicitly references the critical role of the social service workforce to ensure a world where all children are free from violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect and harmful practices. In particular, the second overall programming strategy states the importance of the social service workforce to support inclusive and effective child protection systems in preventing and responding to child protection violations.

3 Networks

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

- International Federation of Social Workers: <https://www.ifsw.org/>
- International Journal for Social Work: <https://newprairiepress.org/ijssw/>
- A free online journal and now publishing its 5th Volume, offers qualitative and quantitative research to support evidence-based practice.
- International Network for School Social Work: <http://internationalnetwork-schoolsocialwork.htmlplanet.com/International%20Network/Index.html> The monthly electronic newsletter of the International Network for School Social Work has, since 2006, provided brief practice articles and news about school social work around the world for distribution internationally through national school social work associations.

NATIONAL NETWORKS¹¹¹

- American Council for School Social Work: <https://www.acssw.org/>
- American School Counselor Association: <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/>
- Association for School Social Work in Switzerland: <http://www.ssav.ch/>

- Hungarian School Social Workers Association: <http://www.miszme.hu/>
- Korea Association of School Social Workers: <https://www.kassw.or.kr>
- Korean Society of School Social Work: <http://www.schoolsocialwork.org>
- National Association of Elementary School Principals: <https://www.naesp.org/>
- National Association of Secondary School Principals: <https://www.nassp.org/>
- National Association of School Psychologists: <https://www.nasponline.org/>
- National Association of School Resource Officers: <https://www.nasro.org/>
- National Association of Support Workers in Education: <http://www.naswe.org.uk/>
- Norwegian Union of Social Educators and Social Workers, FO: <https://www.fo.no>
- School Social Work Association of America: <https://www.sswaa.org/>
- School Social Work Association of America: <http://www.sswaa.org/>
- School Social Work Association of Finland: <http://www.talentia.fi/koulukuraattorit/index.php>
- School Social Work Network Germany: <http://www.schulsozialarbeit.net>
- School Social Work Association of Japan: <http://sswaj.org/index2.html>
- Schulsozialarbeit Liechtenstein: <http://www.schulsozialarbeit.li/>
- Social Workers in Schools New Zealand: <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/working-withchildren/school-programmes/social-workers-in-schools/>
- Swedish School Social Workers Association: <http://www.skolkurator.nu/>



3 Organizational resources

End Violence Against Children. 'Safe to Learn.' Accessed 14 June 2021. <https://www.end-violence.org/safe-to-learn>.

National Association of School Psychologists. 2020. 'NASP Practice Model: Improving outcomes for students and schools.' Accessed 21 July 2021. <https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/nasp-practice-model>.

Model for consistent implementation of school psychological services. Website includes NASP official policy, domains of practice and organizational principles, as well as an implementation guide.

Nickerson A., Amanda B., Jennifer A. Livingston and Kimberly Kamper-DeMarco. 2018. 'Evaluation of Second Step Child Protection Videos: A randomized controlled trial.' *Child Abuse and Neglect* 76: 10-22. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.10.001>.

Randomized control trial evaluating the effects of the Second Step Child Protection Unit videos on parental knowledge, motivation and self-reported communication with their child about child sexual abuse. Participants were parents of children 3–11 drawn from 47 states (U.S.), randomly assigned to either watch the Second Step Videos or (control group) videos on child obesity. The intervention group had significant increases in knowledge and motivation – not a direct effect but a mediated one: videos increased knowledge which then predicted motivation, which in turn predicted conversations. Article also includes information on the components of the Child Protection Unit, including the Protection Motivation Theory that underlies it.

Second Step. 2014-a. *Child Protection in Schools: A four-part solution.* <https://assets.ctfassets.net/98bcvzcrxcl/4AOr3zSfZeuea88CsmiS64/4187e8947ec39944bfb5e6092a334883/child-protection-in-school.pdf>

Second Step resource outlining their research-based, four-component approach to school-based child

protection. 1) Policies and Procedures: including a robust training for school administrators, staff code of conduct, procedures for screening and hiring staff/volunteers, and policies for reporting violations. 2) Staff Training: including teachers alongside other staff. 3) Student Lessons: about personal safety skills, using more active modes of teaching (modelling, rehearsal and reinforcement) over didactic approaches. 4) Family Education: to be done by schools. Also includes an overview of the Second Step Child Protection Unit. Article contains numerous research citations, as well as prevalence data about child abuse and neglect, in and out of school settings (U.S.)

Second Step. 2014-b. *Safe, Supported, and Ready to Learn.* <https://assets.ctfassets.net/98bcvzcrxcl/3a6U1e3tPqok4EoAmUIKaK/5e909b6335f4fb18e57d680d02530349/safe-supported-and-ready-to-learn-wp.pdf>.

Article outlines how to create a safe and supportive learning environment, including centring Social-Emotional Learning through the Second Step programme, which includes the Second Step Bullying Prevention Unit and Child Protection Unit – both research-based prevention and intervention programmes, which can be used separately or in combination. Article also offers an overview of the relationship between complex trauma, school connectedness and school climate; provides an overview of Adverse Childhood Experiences and their effects, as well as traumatic stress and the toxic stress response.

Second Step. 'Child Protection Unit: Working together to keep kids safe from abuse.' Accessed 9 June 2021. <https://www.secondstep.org/child-protection>.

Overview site of Second Step Child Protection Unit – Child Protection Unit includes training, guidance and resources for administrators, teachers, counsellors and families. Student lessons are age-appropriate and designed for Early Learning through Grade 5.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Global Social Service Workforce Alliance, 'Defining the Social Service Workforce', <www.socialserviceworkforce.org/defining-social-service-workforce>, accessed 23 February 2022.
- 2 United Nations Children's Fund, 'Child protection overview', <<https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/overview/>>, accessed 23 February 2022.
- 3 United Nations Children's Fund, 'Child Protection Strategy 2021-2030,' New York, July 2021.
- 4 United Nations Children's Fund, 'Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Service Workforce for Child Protection', New York, 2019.
- 5 In particular, SDG 4, Target 4.a: build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all. See: <https://sdg4education2030.org/the-goal>
- 6 It is important to also recognize that sometimes teachers do report cases, but child protection services are overwhelmed because child protection systems can be understaffed and not have effective resources to respond.
- 7 It is also important to support social service workers. Social service workers can be and feel isolated working in schools. They are not teachers yet are expected to work in an environment with educational goals front and centre, which sometimes do not fully account for the child protection needs of students and the need for communication with, and outreach to, parents and communities.
- 8 Children growing up in institutional care can spend most of their childhood in an institutional setting, which creates additional risks for their development, and their social and emotional well-being. These settings, however, are not discussed here, as they are beyond the scope of this paper, which is focused on mainstream day schools.
- 9 La Voyce B. Reid, 'The Social Context of Creating Safe Schools for Students,' *Children, Families, & Schools Practice Update*, National Association of Social Workers, vol. 2, no. 3, 2002.
- 10 Second Step, *Child Protection in Schools: A Four-Part Solution*, 2014. https://www.cfchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/programs/docs/Second-Step_White-Paper_Child-Protection-in-Schools_FA18.pdf
- 11 Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies and The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, *Position Paper: Collaboration Across Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and Education in Emergencies*, INEE and The Alliance, New York, 2020.
- 12 Council of Europe, 'Violence in Schools,' <www.coe.int/en/web/children/violence-in-schools>, accessed 29 June 2021. See Annex for more information.
- 13 Reid, 'The Social Context of Creating Safe Schools for Students'.
- 14 United Nations Children's Fund, 'Child Protection in Educational Settings: Findings from Six Countries in East Asia and the Pacific,' UNICEF EAPRO, Bangkok, 2012.
- 15 Beddoe, Liz, Irene De Haan, and Eileen Joy, 'If You Could Change Two Things: Social workers in schools talk about what could improve schools' responses to child abuse and neglect,' *Aotearoa New Zealand Social Work*, vol. 30, no. 1, 3 April 2018, pp. 45–57.
- 16 To promote mental health effectively, there is strong evidence that schools need to use a 'whole school approach'. This shapes the social contexts which promote mental health, and which provide a backdrop of measures to prevent mental health disorders. In this context the targeting of those with particular needs and the work of the specialist services can be much more effective. Schools need to use positive models of mental health, which emphasize well-being and competence not just illness. This will help overcome problems of stigma and denial and promote the idea of mental health as 'everyone's business'. The most effective programs in schools which address mental health have the following characteristics:
 - They provide a backdrop of universal provision to promote the mental health of all and then target those with special needs effectively.

- They are multi-dimensional and coherent.
 - They create supportive climates that promote warmth, empathy, positive expectations and clear boundaries.
 - They tackle mental health problems early when they first manifest themselves and then take a long term, developmental approach which does not expect immediate answers.
 - They identify and target vulnerable and at-risk groups and help people to acquire the skills and competences that underlie mental health.
 - They involve end users and their families in ways that encourage a feeling of ownership and participation and provide effective training for those who run the programs, including helping them to promote their own mental health.
- Excerpted from Weare, Katherine, and Wolfgang Markham. 'What Do We Know about Promoting Mental Health through Schools?' *Promotion & Education* 12, no. 3–4 (September 2005): 118–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10253823050120030104>.
- 17 Second Step, 'Safe, Supported, and Ready to Learn'.
- 18 Cowan, Katherine C., et al., *A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools*, National Association of School Psychologists, Bethesda, 2013.
- 19 UNICEF Child Protection Strategy 2021-2030, p.29, excerpt from Table 2, 'Accountabilities of other sectors for the delivery of Child Protection outcomes'.
- 20 Source: Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies and The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, *No Education, No Protection* (evidence paper), INEE and The Alliance, New York, 2021.
- See also Huxtable, Marion, "A Global Picture of School Social Work in 2021," *International Journal of School Social Work*, forthcoming in 2021.
- See also Baron, E. James, Ezra G. Goldstein, and Cullen T. Wallace, 'Suffering in Silence: How COVID-19 school closures inhibit the reporting of child maltreatment,' *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 190, October 2020.
- 21 Ibid
- 22 Source: The World Bank, 'Mission: Recovering education in 2021,' Brief, 30 March 2021, <www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/brief/mission-recovering-education-in-2021>, accessed 21 July 2021.
- 23 Case study obtained from UNICEF Cote d'Ivoire country office
- 24 UNICEF, 'Child Protection in Educational Settings: Findings from Six Countries in East Asia and the Pacific', 2012. <https://www.unicef.org/eap/reports/child-protection-educational-settings>
- 25 See, for example, SDG 4.a: Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all. <<https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4>>
- 26 Second Step, 'Safe, Supported, and Ready to Learn'.
- 27 National Association of Social Workers, *NASW Standards for School Social Work Services*, Washington, DC, 2012. See also Issurdatt, Sharon, 'The School Social Worker in Crisis Situations: The Right Skills, The Right Professional,' *Practice Perspectives*, National Association of Social Workers, Washington DC, April 2013.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies and The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, *Position Paper: Collaboration Across Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and Education in Emergencies*, INEE and The Alliance, New York, 2020.
- 30 Adapted and excerpted from UNICEF, 'Child Protection in Educational Settings: Findings from Six Countries in East Asia and the Pacific'.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Reid, 'Social Context of Creating Safe Schools'.
- 33 Child-Friendly Schools provide a similar approach (see Child Friendly Schools text box in this section). See, for example, Orkodashvili, Mariam, 'Quality Education Through Child-Friendly Schools: Resource allocation for the protection of children's rights,' *Romanian Journal for Multidimensional Education*, vol. 5, no. 1, June 2013, pp. 101-109. Other initiatives that promote integrated child protection and education programming include Save the Children's Safe Schools Common Approach; the International Rescue Committee's Safe Healing & Learning Spaces, and the Norwegian Refugee Council's Better Learning Program. The challenge with most of these initiatives is they do not include a distinct social service workforce role, which is critical specially to ensure effective referral pathways and follow-up. A June 2021 Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) regional learning platform highlighted that within many ministries of education "there is a general lack of understanding around the importance of well-being and its connection to learning. In a lot of cases, mental health and psychosocial well-being is considered a luxury and is deemed as a non-essential part of a child's education." "Barriers and opportunities for embedding PSS into education." (PowerPoint shared by Camilla Lodi, Regional Psychosocial Support Advisor at NRC's Middle East Regional Office.

- 34 Cowan et al., *Framework for Safe and Successful Schools*.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Adapted and excerpted from UNICEF, 'Child Protection in Educational Settings: Findings from Six Countries in East Asia and the Pacific'
- 37 Cowan et al., *Framework for Safe and Successful Schools*
- 38 See section 7 for more information on engaging children, families, and communities.
- 39 United Nations Children's Fund, Action to End Violence against Children in Schools. 'Review of Programme Interventions Illustrating Actions to Address Violence against Children in and around Schools,' 2021, page 22. <<https://www.unicef.org/documents/action-end-violence-against-children-schools>>
- 40 Excerpted and adapted from United Nations Children's Fund, 'Child Protection in Educational Settings: Findings from Six Countries in East Asia and the Pacific,' UNICEF EAPRO, Bangkok, 2012.
- 41 Adapted and excerpted from UNICEF, 'Child Protection in Educational Settings: Findings from Six Countries in East Asia and the Pacific'
- 42 Note on corporal punishment in schools: While much progress has been made, the law in many countries still authorizes violent punishment of children in schools, often even specifying how it must be inflicted, and efforts to prohibit it are sometimes met with strong opposition from teachers and parents. There are currently 64 countries where corporal punishment is currently lawful in schools. See <https://endcorporalpunishment.org/schools/>
- 43 64 countries have not yet prohibited corporal punishment in schools, from data extracted 8th September 2021: <https://endcorporalpunishment.org/countdown/>
- 44 Second Step, *Child Protection in Schools*.
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- 110 The annotated bibliography contains a selection of relevant sources rather than a complete overview. Also, not all sources cited in the document are included in the annotated bibliography.
- 111 Most of these networks were found through Huxtable, Marion, 'A Global Picture of School Social Work in 2021,' *International Journal of School Social Work*, forthcoming in 2021.



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