

School Social Work End of Year Report

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Introduction

As a Master's in social work student and PPS credential candidate, this past school year of field internship has brought a great wealth of knowledge and experiences that has been instrumental in my professional development as a school social worker. The purpose of this paper is to provide details of the school social work services provided to Admiral Akers School for the 2011-2012 school year at the different system levels.

Nestled in the residential area on the Naval Air Base Station in Lemoore is Admiral Akers School. Admiral Akers School primarily provides education to children who reside on base, however not exclusively to base residents. "Akers," as it is called in the community, serves grades k-8th. There was a total enrollment of 669 students in the 2010-11 school year (Annual School Accountability Report Card [SARC], 2012). Of the total enrollment, 54.9% of the students were Caucasian, 19.3% Hispanic/Latino, 10.9% African American, 6.7% Filipino, 4.6% Asian, 1.5% Pacific Islander or Hawaiian, and .1.0% Alaskan Native /Native American, and .01% two or more races. In addition, 7.2% of the total enrollments were eligible for special education services and 2.4% qualified for English learner support services (SARC, 2012).

The faculty and staff at Admiral Akers school consists of administrators, transition specialist, teachers, teacher aides, contracted speech therapists, a school psychologist, a marriage and family therapist intern, two school social work intern from Fresno state and University of Southern California, nurses, student probation officer, student resource officer, custodial staff, and yard duty staff. These various positions provide the students with an array of services to help a child succeed academically, socially, to remain safe and healthy and

provide campus maintenance. These different elements assist with providing a school climate that “encourages openness, trust, self-esteem, self-motivation, respect for self and others” (SARC, 2012, para. 4).

Overview of School Social Work Services Provided

Of the 600 hours required for school field placement, 388 hours were completed at Akers School with services ranging from k-8th grade. At the elementary level at this school in particular there was 130 hours completed. At the middle school level, there was 258 hours completed.

The individual system level included 167 individual face to face contacts with students. Individual contacts pertaining to the service plan include: assessment, social skill building, role plays, homework, feedback, relaxation techniques, and cognitive restructuring. Additional supportive services include academic monitoring, identifying feelings, proper ways of releasing anger, calm down techniques, discussions and reflections of peer and family relationships, home life, stressors, and motivators.

At the group system level there were two groups facilitated. There were a total of 14 group contacts. The duration of one group was ten sessions while the other group was a brief intervention to the 5th grade population of a total of 4 sessions. This group included services of social skill and team building utilizing the evidence-based Second Step curriculum. The ten session group consisted of awareness and identification of feelings, social skill building such as appropriate ways to express anger, problem-solving, and communication.

Understanding the family dynamics in assessment is critical to provide services to produce a striving student. As a school social work intern at Akers, the services provided to

families included, contacting parents and informing them of the individualized work provided for their children, answering questions relating to their child, collaboration with parents to implement interventions to transfer from school to the home environment. At the family system level, families were contacted bi-monthly via phone call, home visit, parent-teacher conference, grade-level team meetings with parents, SST's, IEP's, and before and after school contact. There were a total of 102 family contacts.

Additional family work practice includes offering support to a parent having difficulties with new adjustments and changes in her life such as deployed husband, marital communication concerns, welcoming a new baby, and concerns with her eldest child's relationship with his stepfather. Several home visits and phone contacts were made to check in on mother, discuss the family dynamics and offer support and resources. Furthermore, several phone contacts and home visits were offered to a mother grieving the death of her father in conjunction with individual contact with her daughter on grief.

At the community system level there was collaboration with other outside agencies as related to the academic, social-emotional support and wellbeing of the pupils and their family, and for my professional development and learning. Community contacts include: Base family advocacy meeting, contact with Family Forces, Kings County Child Protective Services, Kings County Truancy Summit, and Exceptional Parents Unlimited. There were a total of 15 community contacts for the 2011-2012 school year. Contact with base personnel was done to gain permission of displaying posters created by the students, to be displayed in the community. A school wide Pennies for Patients campaign was also utilized as a way of teaching the students the importance of giving back to those in need.

At the organizational system level there were 14 class-wide presentations on bullying including: definition of bullying, types of bullying, ways one can prevent bullying, proper ways to act if being bullied and proper ways of report. Additionally, macro work included an organizational power analysis class assignment to identify influential decision makers, their source of power, the allies, and strategies and tactics used to influence organizations.

Outcome of School Social Work Services

The following table outlines the outcomes of school social work services provided at the different system levels at Admiral Akers School for the 2011-2012 school year.

<i>Admiral Akers School Social Work Service Plan</i>				
<i>2011-2012</i>				
System Level	Objective	Interventions	Data Collection Methods	Outcomes
Individual	To increase social interactions and build relaxation techniques to lessen anxiety in social settings with 5 Jr. High students.	Weekly 25 minute individual sessions on various social skill activities and skill building such as role playing social situations and modeling good social interactions (such as greeting, maintaining eye contact and initiating conversations), use CBT to identify feelings, thoughts and behaviors to correct cognitive distortions, teach relaxation techniques.	Pretest questionnaire using a Likert scale for 1-5 (1 being extremely comfortable and 5 being extremely uncomfortable on various social peer situations. Posttests at end of year or until services are discontinued using same questionnaire to gauge if student's total	5 out of 5 students (100%) reported lessened anxiety and more comfort in social settings and interactions. 2 out of 5 students (40%) significantly had reduced anxiety scoring 9 and below on a scale of 1-25 points.

		Assigned weekly tasks for students to practice skills (ex: sitting with a peer during lunch and initiating 2 conversations a week with classmates) and weekly process of how each task went and provide feedback.	points decreased.	
Group	To increase skill building in social interactions, peer relationships, and problem-solving for an enhancement in life skills.	<p>Worked with small group of 3-4 students weekly on social skills such as empathy building, proper eye contact, conflict resolution, and steps to solve problems, and homework.</p> <p>Including weekly check-ins on how student utilized skill set for the week offered feedback.</p>	Personal interviews at the conclusion of the group were utilized to get the perspective of the students involved, parents and teachers on how the behavior of the child may have improved prior to the group.	<p>4 out of 4 (100%) of the students indicated they enjoyed the group and were able to express what they took from the group experience.</p> <p>Parents attested that 3 out of 4 students (75%) saw moderate improvements with their children while one (25%) saw minimal improvement.</p> <p>Teachers indicated improved academics and behavior in 2 out of 4 students (50%).</p>
Family	Build academic parental involvement, support and monitoring for 4 Jr. High students who are academically below in order to increase the pupil's grade point average (GPA).	Bi-monthly conversations with parents regarding their perspective on the academic progress of their child and the importance of utilizing "PowerSchool" to view student's grades, assignments and test scores.	<p>Accessed "PowerSchool" report at the end of each trimester to monitor how many times parents logged on to view student's account.</p> <p>Accessed "PowerSchool" at the end of each</p>	<p>3 out of 4 parents (75%) improved monitoring of their child/children by at least 15%.</p> <p>3 out of 4 students (75%) increased their GPA</p>

		<p>Worked with parents/guardians to discuss the importance of a study/homework routine for student and help parents implement routine with their permission.</p> <p>Collaborated with teachers to support school social worker with parental academic support by utilizing the teachers as another way of relaying to parents the importance of academic monitoring and awareness of student's assignments.</p>	<p>trimester to collect and record pupil's GPA</p>	
<p>Community</p>	<p>To promote a continued sense of social support and community activism within the school context for the 2011-2012 school year.</p>	<p>For Veterans day had students participate in creating "Thank You for Fighting for our Freedom" posters that will be displayed in the community in appreciation of veterans and active duty.</p> <p>Hosted a "Pennies for Patients" drive in the fight against Leukemia and Lymphoma incorporate fun campaign ideas such as "Make Leukemia Disappear" by place the word "leukemia" at the entrance to school. Each time the school collects a certain amount, remove one letter. Encourage students to make leukemia disappear.</p>	<p>Spoke with administrators to get data on school site involvement activities in the previous 2010-2011 school year. Compared end of the year to see if there was an increase of community activism.</p>	<p>There was an increase of 2 (15%) school wide community projects from the 2010-2011 school year to the 2011-2012 school year.</p>

<p>Organization</p>	<p>To decrease bullying/violence by 5% in the school setting for the 2011-2012 school year.</p>	<p>Increased awareness of bullying and resources available by providing a 45 minute power point presentation to 4th -8th grade students.</p> <p>Offered praise and incentives to students displaying positive character that aligned with the school wide “Character Counts” framework</p>	<p>Accessed the number of bully hotline calls made at the end of the 2011-2012 school year and compared it to 2010-2011 school year.</p> <p>Accessed the number of incident reports made at the end of the 2011-2012 school year as related to behavioral/bullying and compared it to 2010-2011 school year.</p>	<p>There was a decrease of 5 calls to the bully hotline calls/internet reports made. A decrease of 20%.</p> <p>There was an increase of 14% in the number of incidents of behavioral/bullying report as compared to the 2010-2011 school year, from 49 to 56.</p>
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Summary

The school service plan for Admiral Akers consisted of several contacts in the various system levels. In evaluating the individual system level it decreased the anxiety of all five students in social interactions through the use of supportive weekly services. The services provided at the group level help build skills to promote the social and emotional aspect of a student’s school experience. At the group level, parents and teachers reported there was a decrease in behavioral problems in classroom and at the home setting. All group participants were able to express what they learned from the group and expressed they enjoyed the experience. Contact to families was done bi-monthly as a way of increasing monitoring of their child/children’s grades, assignments and upcoming tests. This monitoring also helped increase the student’s overall GPA. Contact with community agencies assisted with gaining additional

resources for parents and families for their wellbeing. Although the number of incident reports on bullying increased as compared to last school year, it can be seen as an increase in awareness of reporting and self-advocacy. Through the use of school wide bully awareness and prevention presentations, it appears the pupils became more aware of the variety of ways to report their bullying incidents.

Recommendations

Recommendations for next school year would be to continue assessment of contacting parents, speaking with teachers, and classroom observations to identify students in need of supportive services. As the individual level findings indicate student's benefited from weekly individual contact as related to reduced anxiety. Since this school has a large turnover of students yearly due to the military, a continued effort should include speaking directly with each student and family to identify anxiety, or other mental health concerns that many military students are at risk to. In assessing students for further needed support, examining the students needing support and looking for commonalities of needs would allow for further group formation. A group based on the unique social and emotional support of military children would be recommended as a way of being able to identify their feelings and proper ways of coping due to relocation, transition, and adjustment to parent deployment. The current social skill building group should continue to benefit interpersonal skills, and will also aid in prevention of bullying (Witted & Dupper, 2005). It is important for next school year to continue working closely with parents and assess their own mental health needs due to research showing the mental health of the at-home parent greatly affects the child's distress level, creating behavioral problems. (United States Department of Veteran Affairs, 2009) At the macro level, community and organizational work should include gaining additional community and school wide (teachers,

administrators) efforts to tackle violence prevention including bullying. A recommended needs assessment on bullying should be carried out to identify the view of school staff on bullying and its effects. Whitted and Dupper, (2005) state a needs assessment is essential in preventing school bullying. These recommendations would create a better school environment for students and aid in their academic, social, and emotional success.

Signature

Anne Gonzales, M.S.W./M.A. _____ Date: _____

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