



The National Alliance of Pupil Services Organizations (NAPSO) is a coalition of national professional organizations whose members provide a variety of school-based prevention and intervention services to assist students in becoming effective learners and productive citizens. NAPSO organizations represent over a million members, including school counselors, school nurses, psychologists, school psychologists, social workers and school social workers; occupational, physical, and creative arts therapists; and speech-language pathologists, audiologists, students, parents, and pupil services administrators. NAPSO promotes interdisciplinary practice and cooperation and advocates for ensuring access to quality pupil services for all students.

The Effectiveness of School Mental Health Services: Research, Data, and References

Psychological Services

Psychological services in schools combine the science and practice of psychology with children, youth, families, learners of all ages, and the education process. Psychologists and school psychologists provide a range of psychological assessments, intervention, prevention, crisis response, individual, group, and family counseling, teacher consultation, health promotion, and program development and evaluation services, with a special focus on the developmental processes of children and youth within the context of schools, families, and other systems.

- ❖ **School-based prevention and youth development programming can positively influence a diverse array of social, health, and academic outcomes.**
 - Greenberg, M. T., Weissberg, R. P., Utne O'Brien, M., Zins, J. E., Fredericks, L., Resnik, H., & Elias, M. J. (2003). Enhancing school-based prevention and youth development through coordinated social, emotional, and academic learning. *American Psychologist*, 58 466-474.
- ❖ **Expanded school mental health services in elementary schools have been found to reduce special education referrals and improve aspects of the school climate.**
 - Bruns, E. J., Walrath, C., Glass-Siegel, M., & Weist, M. D. (2004). School-based mental health services in Baltimore: Association with school climate and special education referrals. *Behavior Modification*, 28, 491-512.
- ❖ **School-based mental health programs for elementary school children experiencing severe emotional and behavioral difficulties have demonstrated reductions in conduct disorder behavior, attention deficit/hyperactivity, and depression.**
 - Hussey, D. L., & Guo, S. (2003). Measuring behavior change in young children receiving intensive school-based mental health services. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 31, 629-639

- ❖ **When school-based mental health services are available, students are substantially more likely to seek help, especially those enrolled in special education programs.**
 - Slade, E. P. (2002). Effects of school-based mental health programs on mental health service use by adolescents at school and in the community. *Mental Health Services Research, 4*, 151-166.

- ❖ **Prevention and early intervention programs that target elementary school-aged students who are academically and socially at risk (e.g., Project Achieve) have been shown to produce declines in special education referrals and placement, suspension, grade retention, and disciplinary referrals.**
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2005). *Project ACHIEVE*. Retrieved July 21, 2005, from the SAMHSA Model Program Website: www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov/template_cf.cfm?page=model&pkProgramID=31
 - Shonkoff, J. P., & Phillips, D. A. (Eds). (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development, Board on Children, Youth, and Families, National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

- ❖ **Consultation has been found to yield positive results such as remediating academic and behavior problems for children in school settings; changing teacher's and parent's behavior, knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions; and reducing referrals for psycho-educational assessments.**
 - MacLeod, I. R., Jones, K. M., Somer, C. L., & Havey, J. M. (2001). An evaluation of the effectiveness of school-based behavioral consultation. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 12*, 203-216.
 - Reddy, L. A., Barboza-Whitehead, S., Files, T., & Rubel, E. (2000). Clinical focus of consultation outcome research with children and adolescents. *Special Services in the Schools, 16*, 1-22.

- ❖ **The use of functional behavioral assessments increases the efficacy of interventions. Of 148 intervention cases based on functional assessment, 98.7 percent had outcomes indicating successful behavior change.**
 - Ervin, R. A., Radford, P. M., Bertsch, K., Piper, A. L. Ehrhardt, K. E., & Poling, A. (2001). A descriptive analysis and critique of the empirical literature on school-based functional assessment. *School Psychology Review, 30*, 193-210.
 - Thurlow, M., Ysseldyke, J., Wotruba, J., & Algozzine, B. (1993). Instruction in special education classrooms under varying student-teacher ratios. *Elementary School Journal, 93*(3), 305-321).

School Counselor Services

Professional school counselors are responsible for developing comprehensive school counseling programs that promote and enhance student learning. Above all, school counselors are student advocates who work cooperatively with other individuals and organizations to promote the development of children, youth, and families in their communities. School counselors, as members of the educational team, consult and collaborate with teachers, administrators, and families to assist students to be successful academically, vocationally, and personally.

- ❖ **Career development strategies that are implemented by school counselors serve to prevent school drop out.**
 - Herring, R. D. (1998). *Career Counseling in Schools: Multicultural and Developmental Perspectives*.

- ❖ **School counseling practices improve social skills of students, particularly those who are at risk. Social skills training also has a positive effect on children with learning disabilities.**
 - Whiston, S.C., & Sexton, T. L. (1998). A review of school counseling outcome research: Implications for practice. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 76, 412-425.
- ❖ **Comprehensive guidance programs have a significant impact on academic achievement and act as a “central contributing factor to student academic success.”**
 - Lapan, Gysbers & Sun. (1997). The impact of more fully implemented guidance programs on the school experiences of students: A statewide evaluation study.
 - Otwell, P. S., & Mullis, F. (1997). Academic achievement and counselor accountability. *Elementary school guidance and Counseling*, 31, 343-348.
- ❖ **School counselors play a significant role in the career planning of high school students. Studies show that career planning interventions by school counselors have a positive effect on students’ career development/career plans and that services are effective for a wide range of students, including children with learning disabilities and minorities.**
 - Whiston, S.C., & Sexton, T. L. (1998). A review of school counseling outcome research: Implications for practice. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 76, 412-425.
- ❖ **Career development programs and interventions by school counselors have been found to have a positive effect on the career goals, career planning skills, and attendance of students.**
 - Herring, R. D. (1998). *Career Counseling in Schools: Multicultural and Developmental Perspectives*.
- ❖ **Career development programs promote student academic achievement, career development, and more supportive school climates.**
 - Herring, R. D. (1998). *Career Counseling in Schools: Multicultural and Developmental Perspectives*.
- ❖ **School counselors can help students develop a “college mindset” to consider post-high school education options.**
 - Fallon (1997). The school counselor’s role in first generations students’ college plans. *The School Counselor*, 44, 384-393.
- ❖ **School counselors are also instrumental in the school to work transition.**
 - Blustein, D., Phillips, S., Jobin-Davis, K., Finkelberg, S., & Roarke, A. (1997). A theory-building investigation of the school-to-work transition. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 25, 364-402.

School Social Work Services

School social workers provide direct mental health services to students, including one to one counseling, group work, classroom presentations, crisis intervention, and assessment. School social workers work as part of a multidisciplinary team in providing special education services and determining eligibility for special education and related services. They work closely with other school personnel and consult with individual teachers and groups of

teachers on issues related to behavior management, classroom management, and special concerns about individual students.

- ❖ **School social workers help students succeed in school by increasing the connection between the student's family and school personnel. Family outreach and case management services provided by school social workers are associated with positive academic progress for students in school.**
 - Bowen, N. K. (1999). A role for school social workers in promoting student success through school-family partnerships. *Social Work in Education*, 21, (1), p 34-47.
 - Henderson, A. T., & Berla, N. (Eds.). (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement*. Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education.
 - Kellaghan, T., Sloane, K., Alvarez, B., & Bloom, B.S. (1993). *The home environment and school learning: Promoting parental involvement in the education of children*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- ❖ **School social work services can be cost effective in the reduction of problem behaviors and school exclusion.**
 - Bagley, C. & Pritchard, C. (1998). The reduction of problem behaviors and school exclusion in at-risk youth: an experimental study of school social work with cost-benefit analyses. *Child and Family Social Work*, 3, 219-226.
- ❖ **The combination of case management and the task-centered approach is an effective intervention school social workers use to reduce school failure.**
 - Bailey-Dempsey, C. & Reid, W. (1996). Intervention design and development: A case study. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 6, (2), p. 208-228.
- ❖ **School social workers initiate programs to help children develop non-violent problem solving skills.**
 - Butcher, D. A. (1999). Enhancing social skills through school social work interventions during recess: gender differences. *Social Work in Education*, 21, (4), p. 249-262.
- ❖ **Project Peace: A Safe Schools Skills Training Program for Adolescents involving school-wide violence prevention activities and cognitive-behavioral training increased prosocial attitudes, the sense of safety in the school environment and reduced violent behavior on school grounds.**
 - De Anda, D. (1999). Project peace: The evaluation of a skill-based violence prevention program for high school adolescents. *Social Work in Education*, 21, (3), p. 137-147.
- ❖ **A cognitive-behavioral approach resulted in better anger management skills and reduced school violence with male students in a day treatment program.**
 - Whitfield, Gary (1999). Validating school social work: An evaluation of a cognitive-behavioral approach to reduce school violence. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 9, (4) p. 399-246.
- ❖ **Continuous and comprehensive school-wide programs that educate students, parents and school personnel about communication and conflict-resolution skills can be effective in reducing violent behavior.**

- Woody, D. (2001). A Comprehensive School-Based Conflict-Resolution Model. *Children in Schools*, 23, (2), p. 115-119.
- ❖ **Bullying and victimization were significantly decreased (50% reduction in the amount of bullying and a decline in other antisocial behaviors) with a program involving 42 schools that educated students, parents and school staff about the problem and provided suggestions for counteracting or preventing it.**
- Olweus, D. (1992). Bully/victim problems among school children: Basic facts and effects of a school-based intervention program. In D.J. Pepler & K.H. Rubin (Eds.), *The development and treatment of childhood aggression* (pp.411-448). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- ❖ **The presence of a school social worker at Individual Family Service Plan meetings resulted in more family assessment and family-centered data on the Individual Family Service Plan.**
- Sabatino, C. A. (2001). Family-Centered Sections of the IFSP and School Social Work Participation, *Children & Schools*, 23, 4, p. 241-252.

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