

Why Does a School Need a School Social Worker?

School social workers are skilled in assessing the needs of students and have knowledge of the cultural differences present with each student. School social workers utilize preventative measures such as home visits, facilitation of groups, coordination of community services and collaboration with school staff to promote an overall healthy school environment.

How Does a School Social Worker Differ From A Department of Family and Children's Services Social Worker (DFCS)?

The school social worker is directly employed by Lee County School System. The school social worker is required to be certified by the Georgia Department of Education and must have a Master's degree in Social Work. There are times when a school social worker will have work in conjunction with a DFCS social worker or case manager. This occurs if a student is in foster care or when a report of neglect or abuse has been made by the school.

What Is The Nature of School Social Work?

School social workers serve students, school personnel, families, and communities in primarily four major ways:

- Early intervention to reduce or eliminate stress within or between individuals or groups.
- Problem-solving services to students, parents, school personnel, or community agencies.
- Early identification of students at risk.
- Work with various groups in schools to develop coping, social and decision-making skills.

How Is a School Social Worker Involved In The Truancy Process?

The school social worker plays an important role in reducing school dropouts and decreasing truancy rates. School social workers monitor the attendance of students, and when a student has missed 5 unexcused/10 excused days or more, a referral is made to the school social worker. The school social worker responds by collaborating with school personnel and parents or guardians and students to determine the nature of the attendance issue. A referral to magistrate/juvenile court may or may not be necessary, depending on the results of the assessment made. The school social worker is usually involved in monitoring attendance long before a student reaches 15 days of absences, especially if a prior history of poor attendance exists.

How Do Social Workers Determine What Students Receive Services?

The school social worker serves all students in Lee County Schools regardless of socioeconomic status, race, or academic status. However, they usually receive their referrals from a school counselor, teacher, administrator, or attendance clerk. Sometimes a community agency may even make a referral to the school social worker. Their day is largely driven by the number of referrals received, and no two days are ever alike. Follow-up action could be as

simple as a telephone call or a series of visits with the student and family over the course of several weeks.

What Type of Students Does a Social Worker Work With?

- Health Problems
- Behavioral Concerns
- Academic Concerns
- Family Needs Resources
- Mental Health Issues
- Attendance Problems
- and Much More