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Best Practice Resource Manual for New Social Workers at District 77

Shelby Lenzen
Minnesota State University, Mankato

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Best Practice Resource Manual for New Social Workers at District 77

Shelby Lenzen

Department of Social Work

Molly Norris, MSW, LICSW- Field Supervisor

Annelies Hagemester PhD, MSW, LISW- Academic Advisor

Minnesota State University, Mankato



Significance and Purpose

When starting a new job many places of employment have new employee orientation. During this process many employers educate the new employee on the background of the company or organization, policies and procedures, what their job entails and the employers expectations of the new social work employee. However, currently in the Mankato School District 77 there is no orientation specific for incoming school social workers or interns to help guide them in their job. This would also benefit MSW practicum students as they enter the school district.

Also, when the social worker or intern starts with District 77 they do not have any suggested curriculum to utilize and have to find their own material to use. Providing suggested evidence based curriculum for the social worker or intern to utilize will make their jobs easier. It will also allow them to utilize material that has been researched and proven to be beneficial to the student population they are working with.

Methodology

A search of the literature through MSU library data-bases such as, SAGE Premier, business source premiere, ProQuest and Social Services Abstracts was conducted, that looked at the importance of new employee orientation, evidence based practices in social work and curricula to utilize at the schools such as those for social skills and self-esteem groups. In addition, a review of all the resources in the community that are helpful for the school social worker, such as mental illness therapists, transportation, housing, food, Blue Earth County and Nicollet County social services, and financial assistance was conducted. This was then organized into a comprehensive manual.

Key word search: new employee orientation, school social workers, evidence based, evidence based curriculum.

Manual Components

1. Contents
2. Welcome
3. Introduction
 - Mission statements
 - Vision statement
 - Philosophical Perspective of School Social Work
4. Job Responsibilities
 - District code of conduct
 - Curriculum
 - Job description
 - Job summary
 - Safety Responsibilities
 - Qualifications
 - Working conditions.
 - Intern expectations
 - RtI implementation
5. Laws and Regulations
 - Attendance Policy
 - Confidentiality
 - Documentation
 - Licensing
 - NASW Code of Ethics
6. Appendixes
 - Acronyms
 - Attendance flow chart
 - Child protection reporting
 - Nicollet County
 - Blue Earth County
 - Community resource list
 - Consent to release private data
 - Employee time sheet
 - Homeless needs assessment form
 - Interpretation services form
 - Leave request form
 - Mileage
 - Application for travel expense approval and claim form
 - Local mileage claim form
 - Mileage chart
 - Progress note form
 - Transportation
 - Youth directory
 - YMCA forms
 - Brother/Sister referral
 - Financial Assistance Application form
 - 5 Point Scale Form

Literature Review

When starting a new job as a school social worker often times the worker is “thrown” into the job without the proper training. Most often new employees orientation to the job consists of introductions to co-workers, review of procedure manual, tour of the setting, and sometimes a presentation to the organizational purpose and structure (Abramson, 1993). Orientation serves as an important time for new employees to learn the organizational norms, social environment, and their specific tasks and roles within the organization (Stephens & Daily, 2012).

As many as 50 to 60 percent of new employees leave their jobs within the first seven months of hiring, and given the increasing cost of hiring and training new employees, the high cost of turn over, and the need to retain knowledgeable workers, the importance of new hire orientation becomes more important (Dunn & Jasinski, 2009).

To help the social worker with the “shock” of starting a new job Abramson (1993) suggests to utilize the following areas of content when conducting new employee orientation: History and mission of agency, organizational content, teamwork skills, supervision and accountability, role expectations and interagency and community context.

Conclusions

School social workers must be well informed and up-to-date on the policies that mandate all aspects of public education (Franklin, Harris, & Allen-Meares, 2006). Social workers trained as direct service practitioners report that they often feel powerless in dealing with the complex organizational structure and multiple processes of the school (Franklin, Harris, & Allen-Meares, 2006). By orienting a new school social worker to the policies and procedures along with evidence based practice curriculum, they will be able to provide the best care to the students, families, and community. They will also feel more prepared to do their job within the district. The district will begin to use this new School Social Work Manual this fall.

References - Available from the author upon request.