



International Network for School Social Work

<http://internationalnetwork-schoolsocialwork.htmlplanet.com>

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Schoolmaatschappelijkwerk in Curacao

Curacao became part of the Caribbean Dutch Kingdom, following the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles in 2010. Population is 142,180. The main language spoken is Papiamentu. Dutch is the language spoken mostly in the schools. School social workers have the BSW degree and have been working in the schools since 1985. There are now 15 school social workers, each covering ten schools. They are employed by the school system, providing a full range of social work services on request of the school, teacher or school principal. Information from Ruckly Ettienne.



School Social Work in Trinidad and Tobago

Population is 1.3 million. English is the country's official language and two English-based creole languages (Trinidadian Creole or Tobagonian Creole) are spoken. Initially persons with a degree in the Social Sciences (BSc in psychology, sociology, behavioural science as well as social work) were employed as school social workers. There has been a revision of the employment policy recently however to give preference to persons with degrees in social work over other qualifications. School social workers are employed by the Student Support Services Division of the Ministry of Education. School social work service began in 2004. There are currently 45 people employed as school social workers providing the full range of services. Prior to this date students received social work intervention from social workers based in the Ministry of Social Development. Information from Mary Bastien.



School Social Work in South Africa

Population estimate is 48,810,427. School social workers are employed in South Africa by the Provincial Education departments or directly by the school through the School Governing Body. They hold a degree in Social Work and are registered with the Professional Council of Social Work. The Research Monograph *Exploring the Viability of School-Based Support for Vulnerable Children* (see below) reports that the shortage of social workers available to schools means that teachers are left trying to carry out the social work role of providing care. Information from Carola Petersen.



Exploring the Viability of School-Based Support for Vulnerable Children A Case Study of Two Township schools in Johannesburg

http://www.create-rpc.org/pdf_documents/PTA46.pdf

The research on which this paper is based was commissioned by the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE <http://www.create-rpc.org>). CREATE is funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) for the benefit of developing countries and is coordinated from the Centre for International Education, University of Sussex.

This case study of a primary and a secondary school in a Johannesburg township was designed to evaluate the feasibility of the South African Department of Education's plan to create "caring schools" for township schools with limited resources. The goal of the caring schools movement is to transform schools into sites for children's services with health promotion, care for orphans, social services and psychosocial support for vulnerable children.

The study was done starting with a literature review of models for providing care through schools, followed by surveys, interviews with teachers individually and in groups and observations. The two schools selected had a high proportion of vulnerable children, few resources and large class size (45 to 60 children per class). Vulnerable children included children who are orphaned, neglected, abused, affected by poverty or disabled.

The study found that teachers supported the concept of turning schools into caring communities, but they doubted that it is feasible to fulfill such a function with the present level of resources and the tremendous needs of the children. They cited excessive class size, lack of training, poor funding, shortage of social workers, lack of community support, and inadequate Government support to make it a reality. Even the feeding program is under-funded and does not reach all the children or make it possible to feed them every day.

The burden of caring falls on the teachers, already burdened by over-crowded classes and poor salaries. They find themselves trying to provide counseling, liaison with the homes, even providing food for hungry children. Many teachers feel the strain of trying to both teach and fulfill the caring function without adequate support.

The research demonstrates that many components are needed to turn the school into a center of caring services for children. School social workers are one necessary part of a system that must be adequately funded and supported to meet the needs of vulnerable learners.