

UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK
MAIN EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER, MAY 2019

TITLE OF PAPER:	SOCIAL WORK IN SCHOOLS
COURSE CODE:	SWK 230
TIME ALLOWED:	TWO (2) HOURS
INSTRUCTIONS:	1. ANSWER ANY THREE (3) QUESTIONS
	2. ALL QUESTIONS CARRY EQUAL
MARKS	3. TOTAL MARKS 100

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION IS
GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR

QUESTION 1

Case Example: Neglect

Lana was 13 and began attending school midway through the school year. Her attendance was erratic, so she was referred to the school social worker. The social worker made a home visit to the address that Lana was using. It was a local motel. Lana was living with both her grandparents. The day the social worker made the visit, a man in his twenties was just leaving as the social worker arrived. Lana's grandparents were very defensive about the social worker's visit and gave her very little information.

Lana returned to school the next day, and the social worker met with her. She did not come forward with much information. She did give some specific indicators to the social worker that she was sexually active, so the social worker called child protective services (CPS), which made a visit to the motel. They found that Lana was being sold out for sexual acts and that the grandparents were making the arrangements. The family moved after the initial CPS investigation, and the school social worker lost the ability to work with and help Lana. Sometimes school social workers are unable to intervene on all of the levels necessary, and it is very frustrating.

- a) Discuss the warning signs of abuse and neglect based on the case above.
- b) Can you think of a more effective way to help Lana besides involving child welfare services?
- c) How would you use the Swaziland's Children Welfare and Protection Policy of 2012 in Lana's case?
- d) How would the Sexual Offenses and Domestic Violence Act of 2018 be relevant in Lana's case?
- e) How would a social worker apply the best interest of a child in this case?

QUESTION 2

Case Example: Suicide

A 16-year-old high school junior at a large high school (over 2,000 students) had made a suicide plan. She gave away prized possessions and told each of her seven teachers goodbye at the end of class. She knew her parents and sister would be gone on that particular evening, so when they all left, she wrote a note and went into the garage and hung herself. On Monday when school personnel discovered the suicide, they began to talk about the last

time they had seen her. The teachers had been told goodbye but did not think about the significance and impact of that message until they realized that each teacher had been told the same thing. The young woman had given important personal items—a bracelet and a teddy bear—to a couple of her friends. The school social worker was called to help deal with the aftermath of the suicide and to check on other students to see if they had any suicide pacts. When the victim's behavior prior to the suicide was discovered, it surprised the social worker and counseling staff to learn that no one had recognized any of the classic warning signs of suicide. The school social worker and a school psychologist put together a class that described the classic warning signs of suicide and offered it to teachers as part of professional development on an ongoing basis for several years.

- a) Name and discuss the warning signs that a social worker must pay attention to in the case above.
- b) Describe how a social worker could implement a suicide prevention program for students, parents and school personnel.
- c) What are some of the best practices when working with suicidal clients?
- d) How can a social worker use empowerment approaches and strengths based perspectives in dealing with suicidal students.
- e) How can a social worker identify and/ help a student who is self-cutting/self harming as a way to cope with their internal/external pain.

QUESTION 3

Case Example: Drug abuse

Sean's father was in an out of prison for drug trafficking. Sean, age 13, in seventh grade, was an only child and lived with his mother, who had many emotional problems. He was often hit and threatened by his mother. The two of them made bi-monthly visits to see his father. When the school social worker met Sean, Sean's father had been incarcerated for 5 years and had at least 5 more years on his sentence before he would be released. Sean was extremely moody and violent at school. He would often explode into loud, name-calling outbursts, or spend an entire school day with his head on his desk refusing to do any work. He was placed in a special education classroom for emotionally disturbed students. Sean was good-looking and had good social skills. His classmates all liked him, but he treated his teacher and classroom aide with disdain. Whenever he had an outburst at school, the teacher would try to have his mother help with the problem. However, during one school meeting, the mother hit Sean and tore his shirt in front of the teacher.

The school social worker tried to intervene. On most visits with the social worker, Sean would talk openly about his life and how hopeless he felt. The social worker helped Sean to focus on his strengths and commit himself to passing his classes. He would do well in school until he made a visit to see his father, then the depression would start all over again. Child protective services was involved to help the mother stop hitting Sean. She did not seem to make much progress, even though the agency intervened more than once.

The social worker referred Sean to the community mental health agency, which provided medication for depression that helped him slightly. However, he was never fully committed to continuing the counseling sessions, and his mother refused to see the counselor. The school social worker advised his teacher to stop calling the mother whenever there were school problems and, instead, to deal only with Sean. Sean seemed to appreciate the control he was given over his own situation at school and improved over the course of the social work intervention.

- a) Discuss legislative pieces that a social worker can use when dealing with this case? Explain how these legal instruments would be used in Sean's case.
- b) Examine how school social workers can help boys like Sean learn to stop disruptive habits before their self-esteem is affected.
- c) Discuss Krovetz (1999) listed characteristics to help overcome adversity and show how they would apply to Sean.
- d) Explain how school social worker can help develop resilient characteristics in Sean?
- e) Discuss the best interest of a child based on this case.

QUESTION 4

Case Example: Gangs

Brett was in seventh grade and had joined a gang while he was spending the summer with his mother during his annual stay with her. His mother lived in an apartment surrounded by drug dealers. Brett had joined the gang to be included with the guys in the neighborhood and had been tattooed, shaved his head, and wore gang colors. When he returned to his father's home, the father was alarmed at his changed appearance and attitude. Even though many schools do not permit gang colors or headbands, Brett wore the same color to school every day and said it was his gang's blue. The father called the school and asked for help to make sure Brett was not in classes with any members of the gang. The school administration, teachers, and the school

social worker worked closely with Brett to help him meet new friends and feel accepted during his first year in middle school.

Unfortunately, Brett had begun selling drugs and was arrested at school for possession of marijuana. He was sent to a juvenile school placement program for the rest of his seventh-grade year. The school social worker continued to visit Brett weekly and listened to his concerns about staying in school and wanting to make his father proud of him. He did not go to stay with his mother the next summer, and during eighth grade, the school social worker continued to interact with Brett's probation officer and teachers to help him stay motivated and away from the gang. He was able to break his gang contacts. The court ordered him to have the tattoos on his hands removed as a condition of his probation. His grades and school attendance continued to improve, and he was able to make some positive friendships at his new school.

- a) Discuss the impact of an absent parent on the life of Brett.
- b) Describe a behavior instruction plan as discussed by Colvin (1992).
- c) What are would be the best practices for a school social worker in the case of Brett?
- d) How can school social workers help create a positive atmosphere on a school to reduce the isolation that causes some students to want to join gangs?
- e) How can the use of strengths perspective improve school social work services with children attracted to gangs?

QUESTION 5

Discuss the National Association of Social Workers [NASW] (2002) standards for social work services.

QUESTION 6

- a) Discuss critically the three defining features of Autism Spectrum Disorder/ Asperger Syndrome.
- b) Discuss how social workers can assist teachers and learners to understand students with Autism Spectrum Disorder/Asperger Syndrome
- c) What is the role of a social worker when working with a child who has Autism Spectrum Disorder/ Asperger Syndrome?

- d) How can a social worker help link home and school environment in order for the child with Autism Spectrum Disorder/ Asperger Syndrome to be well adjusted in both environments?
- e) What is the role of social workers in working with parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder/ Asperger Syndrome?