

## School Social Workers (SSW):

School Social Workers' history goes back to the early 1900's when they were known as "Visiting Teachers" or "Home and School Visitors". Since its inception, SSWs have been hired to address the needs of the students by bridging the gap between the school, family, and community (Sosa, Cox, & Alvarez, 2017). SSWs are trained mental health professionals with a Master's degree in Social Work and a Pupil Personnel Services Credential. They have special expertise in understanding family and community systems and linking students and their families with community services essential to promote student success. School Social Workers' training includes specialized preparation in cultural diversity, systems theory, social justice, risk assessment and intervention, consultation and collaboration, and clinical intervention strategies to address the mental health needs of students. They work to remedy barriers to learning created as a result of poverty, inadequate health care, neighborhood violence, and many other risk factors. They work with teachers, administrators, parents, and other educators to provide coordinated interventions and consultation designed to keep students in school and help families access the supports needed to promote student success as it relates to and measured by academics, emotional intelligence, and resiliency.

## Role & Function:

School Social Workers have a multifaceted role. SSWs provide interventions and support at all Tier levels of a MTSS model. SSWs provide services unique to school setting. There is assessment and consultation within the school team. There is direct work with students and parents individually and in groups. The key to all services is the assessment. The assessment is a systematic way of understanding what is taking place in relationships in the classroom, within the family, and between the family, school, and community. The SSW looks for units of attention-places where intervention will be most effective.

The following highlights some potential interventions at each Level of a Multi-Tier System of Support:

### Tier 1: Universal Prevention Services (All Students)

- Support current Universal services
- Conduct School-Wide assessment (identify greatest universal risk factors & subgroups)
- Development of new Universal programs/services
- Available to provide support to all students (e.g. resources, crisis counseling, conflict mediation)
- Home-School-Community Liaison
- Parent education & support classes
- In-service for students, parents, and school staff

### Tier 2: Selective Early Intervention Services

- Conduct functional assessments for individual case management planning
- Create self-management tools for students
- Support Check-In/Check-Out (CICO) program
- Small group instruction using evidence-based interventions (e.g. social competence, self-regulation, etc.)
- Juvenile Delinquency/Gang Diversion programs
- Teacher/classroom consultation
- Other Universal supports

### Tier 3: Indicated (Wrap-around/Case Management Services)

- Intensive case management includes but not limited to: Biopsychosocial assessments, individual and treatment plans, referrals to services, and monitoring and supervision
- Collaboration with Inter-disciplinary teams and service providers
- Provide individual and/or family counseling

