

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**SW 534- SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTIONS WITH CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS**

Course Outline  
Spring 2008

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**Course Requirements/Evaluation Procedures:**

Lectures, class discussions, and role-plays will be utilized in this course. The instructor and students share responsibility for raising important issues and questions related to the lectures and assigned readings. *Students are expected to come to each class session ready to discuss the assigned readings for that class.* Please notify the instructor in a timely manner if circumstances interfere with class attendance or the completion of course requirements.

Discussion board assignments (4 @ 10 points each)	40 pts. (10%)
Mid-term exam	100 pts. (25%)
Best Practices Paper	120 pts. (30%)
Presentation of Best Practices Paper	20 pts. (5%)
Final exam	100 pts. (25%)
Attendance/Participation	20 pts. (5%)

**Assignment of Final Grades**

The final course grade will be based on the following:

A = 376-400 points (Superior performance, exceeds expectations)

B+ = 348-375 (Better than satisfactory performance)

B = 328-347 (Satisfactory performance)

C+ = 308-327 (Less than satisfactory performance)

C = 280-307 (Performance well below the standard expected of graduate students)

**Required text:**

Allen-Meares, P. & Fraser, M.W. (2004). *Intervention with children and adolescents: An interdisciplinary perspective*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.

Other course readings may be found at on-line library reserve

**Course Content Outline:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics/Readings</b>
1/10	<i>Course overview</i>

1/17	<i>Foundations for practice with children and adolescents; developmental considerations; confidentiality issues and other ethical dilemmas; new hope and enduring challenges</i>
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**Readings:**

-Chapters 2 & 24 (Allen-Meares & Fraser text)

-Risk and resilience in childhood (Fraser text- ch. 2)

- Necessary background for helping children (Webb text- ch. 2)
- Combating adultcentrism (Petr text- ch. 4)
- Recommendations for clinicians (Barrett & Ollendick text-pp. 32-39)

**Before next class:**

- respond to discussion board #1

1/24 *Effects of poverty on childhood; homeless children and youth; “No place like home” video; assessment in social work practice with children and adolescents*

**Readings:**

- Chapters 6 & 17 (Allen-Meares & Fraser text)
- Assessment and diagnosis in evidenced-based practice (Barrett & Ollendick text ch. 3)
- Biopsychosocial assessment (Webb text- ch. 4)
- Assessment to intervention system (Schroeder & Gordon text- ch. 2)
- Assessment instruments (Schroeder & Gordon text- appendix A & B)
- Eamon, M.K. (2001). The Effects of Poverty on Children's Socioemotional Development: An Ecological Systems Analysis. *Social Work*, 46, 256-266.

**Before next class:**

- respond to discussion board #2

1/31 *Controversies surrounding the use of the DSM with children and youth; an alternative diagnostic code for children birth-three (DC:0-3 and rationale); controversies surrounding the psychopharmacological treatment of child and adolescent mental disorders*

**Readings:**

- Bentley, K. & Collins, K.S. (2006). Psychopharmacological treatment for child and adolescent mental disorders (chapter 2). In C. Franklin, M.B. Harris & P. Allen-Meares (Eds.) *The School Services Sourcebook*. Oxford University Press.
- Zeanah, C.H. & Benoit, D. (1995). Clinical applications of a parent perception interview in infant mental health. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, v4, n3. Pp. 539-554.

2/7 *One-on-one work with children; behavior modification; creative interventions with children; play therapy video*

**Readings:**

- One-on-one work with the child (Webb text- ch. 7)

**Assignment:**

Presentation of a topic/issue from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, [www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org).

2/14 *Working with adolescents; strategies designed to “win teens over”; goals of adolescent misbehavior; Reality Therapy*

**Readings:**

- Solution-focused therapy with child behavior problems (Case study 2-1)
- Homebuilders: Helping families stay together (Case study 2-3)
- other readings TBA

**Before next class:**

- respond to discussion board #3

2/21 *Cognitive/cognitive-behavioral therapy with adolescents; working with resistant adolescents (audiotope and video presentations); creative interventions with*

*adolescents*

**Readings:**

- Chapter 23 (Allen-Meares & Fraser text)
- Case study in childhood anxiety (Case study 1-1)

2/28 *Small group work with children and adolescents; ethical considerations in group work with minors; logistics of group formation; design and utility of life/social skills groups with children and adolescents*

**Readings:**

- Dupper, D.R. (2006). Design and utility of life skills groups in schools (chapter 58). In C. Franklin, M.B. Harris & P. Allen-Meares (Eds.) *The School Services Sourcebook*. Oxford University Press.
- LeCroy, C.W. (2006). Designing and facilitating groups with children (chapter 57). In C. Franklin, M.B. Harris & P. Allen-Meares (Eds.) *The School Services Sourcebook*. Oxford University Press.
- Social skills group for children (Case study 3-1)
- Empowering adolescent girls: The Go Grrrls Social Skills Training Program (Case study 3-3)

3/6 *Prevention strategies/programs; crisis intervention with children and adolescents*

**Readings:**

- Chapter 13 (Allen-Meares & Fraser text)
- Weissberg, R. P., Kumpfer, K.L.& Seligman, M.E.(2003). Prevention that works for children and youth. *American Psychologist, 58*, 425-432.
- Nation, M., Crusto, C., Wandersman, A., Kumpfer, K.L., Seybolt, D., et al. (2003). Principles of effective prevention programs. *American Psychologist, 58*, 449-456.
- Crisis intervention with a depressed African American adolescent (Case study 1-3)

**3/13 MID-TERM EXAM**

**3/20 NO CLASS- SPRING BREAK!**

3/27 *Practice with children of color; practice with gay and lesbian youth; “Growing up gay” video; assessment and treatment of ethnically diverse children and youth*

**Readings:**

- Chapters 3 & 5 (Allen-Meares & Fraser text)
- Assessment and treatment of ethnically diverse children and adolescents (Barrett & Ollendick text -ch. 5)
- Gay youth and safe places (Case study 3-5)
- Crisis intervention with a depressed African-American adolescent (Case study 1-3)
- A culturally grounded empowerment group for Mexican-American girls (Case study 3-4)

**Before next class:**

- respond to discussion board #4

**4/33 Best Practices papers are due**

*Practice with children and adolescents diagnosed with ADHD*

**Readings:**

- Dupper, D.R. & Musick, J. (In Press). Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

(Chapter 4). In B.A. Thyer (Ed.) *Social Work in Mental Health*. Published by John Wiley and Sons.

-A child with ADHD (Case study 1-2)

4/10 Class presentations of Best Practices papers

4/17 Class presentations of Best Practices papers

4/24 Class presentations of Best Practices papers

## **FINAL EXAM (TBA)**

### **Best Practices Paper**

While many social work educators emphasize the importance of selecting interventions that are evidenced-based, most social workers, faced with large caseloads and excessive paperwork, do not take the time to seek out the professional literature. Instead, they rely upon practice wisdom, appeals to authority, or intuition to guide their practice decisions (Gambrill, 1999). There is little evidence to suggest that social workers currently use research findings to support their practice decisions (Cournoyer & Powers, 2002). Most social work practitioners “are unlikely to have the time, inclination, support, or resources to either read research or integrate it into their day-to-day practice” (Holosko & Leslie, 1998, pp. pp. 436-437 as cited in Cournoyer & Powers). In this age of increasing accountability and scrutiny, it is important to make practice decisions based upon the best available scientific evidence rather than good intentions. It is possible to be an empathic, warm-hearted practitioner who also uses analytical and scientific skills in making practice decisions (Gibbs & Gambrill, 1999).

Evidenced-based practice (EBP) has been referred to as “the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making [practice] decisions” (Sackett, et al., 1997, p. 2). It is a way to handle uncertainty in an honest and informed manner, sharing ignorance as well as knowledge (Chalmers, 2003). A number of steps have been identified in the implementation of evidenced-based practice (Cournoyer & Powers, 2002; Gibbs & Gambrill, 1999). These steps are:

#### *1) Formulate a searchable practice question*

This step involves developing an answerable question that is specific and involves a description of the client or client system, intervention method, and desired outcome(s). It can involve a remedial intervention or a prevention program.

#### *2) Conduct a comprehensive and efficient practice-effectiveness search of reputable resources*

In conjunction with the more specific terms in the question, this step involves the use of keywords such as *research, study, effectiveness, efficacy, outcome, evaluation, model, intervention, and prevention* (Cournoyer & Powers, 2002). In this example, a combination of the preceding terms are used in conjunction with the more specific key terms in your question (e.g., “bullying”). We use this combination of terms to search databases. Fortunately, a growing number of databases are available on-line and can be accessed from home computers or laptops connected to the internet. Important databases for school social workers that can be accessed on-line include ERIC, Social Sciences Citation Index, Social Work Abstracts, Dissertation Abstracts, PsycINFO, and Web of Science. These databases contain abstracts of refereed journal articles, and books. In addition, a number of websites contain scientific reports that focus on current research and best practice guidelines for problems

facing school-aged children and youth.

The Campbell Collaboration <http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/> and the Cochrane Collaboration [www.cochrane.org/](http://www.cochrane.org/) are websites that contain systematic reviews of research studies.

*3) Critically analyze the practice effectiveness research literature in terms of validity, reliability, and usefulness*

The next step involves a critical evaluation of a particular study or a meta-analysis. It involves an analysis of the methodology used in a particular study in relation to internal and external validity, the validity and reliability of the measures used to assess change, and its usefulness in answering the research question posed. What is the evidence that a particular intervention or program is effective for a particular client or client system? Is there a lack of evidence to sufficiently answer your practice question?

*4) Obtain informed consent and applying the evidenced-based intervention*

If you have found an empirically-supported treatment/intervention for your particular practice question, you will next pursue the mutually agreed upon goals through the implementation of this empirically-supported treatment/intervention. An essential aspect of implementation is close attention and monitoring of intervention integrity (e.g., ensuring that each component of the intervention is carried out as planned). It is important that the practitioner seeks the client's informed consent to participate in the specific intervention/treatment. In the case of minor children, the parent or legal guardian must provide this informed consent and the minor child should give his or her assent orally or in writing. This informed consent should include an assessment of the risks and potential benefits of participating in the intervention/treatment.

*5) Evaluate the outcome of the intervention against performance criteria*

This step involves the formulation of goals that are specific and relevant to the client's presenting problem. It is important to measure change in the desired direction by comparing pre-intervention (or baseline) data with data collected during the intervention phase. (For an in-depth discussion of single-system methodology designed for practitioners, see *Evaluating practice: Guidelines for the accountable professional* by Bloom, Fischer, and Orme, 1999).

*6) Teach others to do evidenced-based practice*

Once it has been shown that a particular intervention or program is effective, it is essential that this information be shared with your colleagues at work and at professional conferences. It is also important to advocate for the utilization of these steps with your supervisor and professional colleagues.

In this paper, each student will explore a specific problem/disorder involving social work practice with children and adolescents.

**This paper must include the following three sections and include subheadings for each section:**

- I. A thorough description of the problem/disorder and its prevalence as well as specific treatment issues/needs of children/adolescents in relation to this problem/disorder. This includes a description of the relevant social/emotional, economic, educational, medical, family, community, societal issues/needs that should be addressed by social workers in conducting a comprehensive assessment and in planning their intervention(s) in relation to this problem/disorder. This section concludes with a specific, answerable question (see #1 above).
- II. A critical analysis of the ***available assessment and practice effectiveness research literature*** related to this specific problem/disorder involving social work practice with children and adolescents. Is there sufficient empirical evidence to support the application of particular intervention(s)/program(s) in addressing the problem/disorder you have selected for this paper? What is the empirical evidence that a particular intervention or program is effective for this particular client or client system? To what extent do these interventions or programs reflect the values and ethics of the social work

profession (please be specific)? What gaps currently exist in the effectiveness research literature in addressing the problem/disorder you have selected for this paper? (see #2 and #3 above)

*Your paper must include a minimum of five recent (2000-present) references.*

*Papers must be typed, and double-spaced. Papers should be no longer than 15 pages including references (12 point font size). This paper is due no later than the beginning of class on April 5, 2007.*

### **Bibliography**

- Barrett, P.M. & Ollendick, T.H. (2004). *Handbook of Interventions that work with children and adolescents: Prevention and treatment*. West Sussex, England: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Burns, B.J. & Hoagwood, K. (2002). *Community treatment for youth*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc.
- Fraser, M.W. (Ed.) (1997). *Risk and resilience in childhood: An ecological perspective*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.
- Kazdin, A.E. & Weisz, J.R. (2003). *Evidence-based psychotherapies for children and adolescents* New York : Guilford Press.
- LeCroy, C.W. & Daley, J.M. (Eds.) (2005). *Case studies in child, adolescent, and family treatment*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.
- Petr, C.G. (2004). *Social work with children and their families: Pragmatic foundations (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc.
- Rapp-Paglicci, L.A., Dulmus, C.N. & Wodarski, J.S. (2004). *Handbook of preventive interventions for children and adolescents*. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Schroeder, C.S. & Gordon, B.N. (2002). *Assessment and treatment of childhood problems: A clinician's guide (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Webb, N.B. (1996). *Social work practice with children*. New York: The Guilford Press.