

MADRAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

PG DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK – (DISABILITY AND EMPOWERMENT)

Report on

Workshop-I -School counselling and art therapy

About the workshop series

Social work profession that always demands one to update regularly on their skills and techniques to excel in this field. To enhance the skills, the PG Department of social work (Disability and Empowerment) organised a series of workshops on “*Skill enhancement for social work students*”. The team of experts from the field of social work and allied professionals, identified by the department enlightened the students with their experiences and knowledge to help the students to equip and meet the career demands and excel in their field of Disability and Empowerment.

Workshop 1: School counselling and art therapy

Resource persons:

Ms. Nivetha,

School counsellor

School counselling:

The workshop started at 9:30 am with the students who assembled at the 4th floor main block of the MSSW campus. The resource person introduced herself and conducted an ice breaker session throwing the ball which contained a story. The main aim of this activity was the students were asked to create their own story and pass it to the person next to them. This involved the process of communication through coordination, collaboration and consultation. Later the resource person gave a brief session about how a school counsellor covers all the areas of the school that is from standard 1st to 12th and how to deal with these students based on their problems and age groups.

After the session the students were divided into 3 groups to enact a role play

1. Group were asked to enact as elementary school students
2. Group were asked to enact as middle school students
3. Group were asked to enact as High school students.

From this activity the students were able to understand the thought process of children studying in various classes. The counsellor explained how it is difficult to build rapport with

elementary school students therefore the counsellor will first approach class teacher and her major focus will be group work after individual sessions.

She also explained about the way she approaches and provides counselling to middle school students. These children will not be ready to take up responsibility therefore the counsellor with collaboration of the class teacher will assess the student's wellbeing. It is important to develop a strong professional relationship with the class teacher so that the time schedule to meet the students will be less complicated.

High school involves individual counselling as the children are matured enough to perceive things than elementary school children with whom the counsellor involves both the parents and teachers to assess them.

Lastly she concluded by saying some of the common issues faced by school students:

- Learning disability
- Abuse prevalent among middle school students
- More bullying and teasing is faced by disabled students.

Students questions and answer session;

The students asked questions on the assessment provided to high school students. The counsellor responded by saying that she gives group activities like "tell a lie" where the counsellor will be able to understand emotions such as grief of the student.

When asked about the tools used for parents and teachers she responded saying that questionnaires and surveys will be conducted. The next was how the students will approach the counsellor sharing sensitive issues such as abuse or violence and do boys share about these issues openly to the counsellor because they feel vulnerability is a sign of weakness. For this counsellor answered by saying that it depends on the trust which is built by the counsellor towards the student,

There was also a question on issues such as identity crises and sexual orientation among students. She answered that LGBTQ is not a topic that is widely shared among school students or teachers as people are not open minded and there have been issues such as misclassifications, changing of sexuality etc. these are the things that are addressed through group awareness and group activity sessions.

Art Therapy:

The program was started at 10:30 am after Miss Nivetha's school counselling session Mrs.Shathini Kalpurniya started her session on Art therap.In this session she explained briefly about the importance of art therapy and how it is applicable for all the age groups.

And she also mentioned the difference between art therapy and art class where Art therapy focuses on the process and art class focuses on the final product.

The main concept of art therapy is to express one's thought through scribbling and also one should ensure that the same technique is not used for all the sessions. She also mentioned about the scope of art therapy where this type of therapy can be used in Schools, colleges, orphanages and old age homes. Art therapy can also be used in research. She also mentioned that there are two types of art therapy

- 1) Directive; drawing through instructions
- 2) Non directive; Drawing whatever one likes

She presented a case study of a child where masking and unmasking was implemented. After that she asked the students to draw their family from this she told the students to observe the drawing were if the drawing is horizontal one feels emotional and if the Drawing is practical. She also mentioned the art therapy provided to school students to understand their family dynamics.

Lastly she asked everyone to draw their own anxiety monster and she explained the importance of expressing and addressing our fears.

With these inputs she concluded by saying that

The main benefit of art therapy is to understand oneself and to become aware of one's own emotions and feelings.

Conclusion:

The students received ample knowledge about the school counselling and its purpose they learnt various terms and assessments that have been provided by the counsellor they also understood how each student is unique and how these students are provided with counselling according to their age group the students had an enriching experience. And the student received wonderful insights about art therapy. They learnt about the way therapists assess nonverbal communication while the client is expressing one's emotions through the form of art.