

International Network for School Social Work

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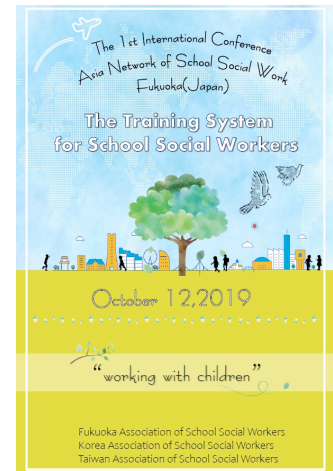
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The Establishment of the Asia Network of School Social Work (ANSSW)

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On 12 October 2019, the first International Conference of ANSSW was held in Fukuoka city, Japan. The theme of the conference was, “The Training System for School Social Workers”. Before the symposium, short video clips titled “A day of a school social worker”, produced by each association, were shown. In the symposium, the speakers introduced their training system to become a school social worker and to improve the expertise of present school social workers. All school social workers and researchers who participated from Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Singapore got to know each other better in a friendly atmosphere.



Each organization in Korea, Taiwan, Japan and Singapore

In **Korea**, the Ministry of Education started social work services in schools between 1997-1999. In 2000, the Korea Association of School Social Workers (KASSW) was established. In 2005, the first qualification test for school social workers was carried out with the cooperation of KSSSW (Korean Society of School Social Work), KASW (Korea Association of Social Workers) and other organizations. By 2019, there were 1,460 people who qualified as school social workers. After the acquisition of a qualification, they need over 20 hours supervision and in-service training every five years to renew their qualification. In 2018, school social work was recognized in Law as a professional field of social welfare. From now, the government will administer the training curriculum, the qualification test and in-service training for school social workers. KASSW will promote the supervision and in-service training for school social workers.

In **Taiwan**, the Chinese Fund for Children and Families aimed to launch school social work projects between 1977-1985. The goal of these projects was to help high school dropouts with an emphasis on collaboration between school social workers and local communities. In the following three decades, there were several severe cases of school bullying, sexual harassment and abuses which caused the public and authorities to pay attention to the necessity of deploying social workers at schools. In August of 2013, TASSW was established in New Taipei City, aiming to advocate for school social workers in Taiwan. Since 2014, TASSW has continued to hold school social work conferences to assist with development as well as provide advocacy training and lobby lawmakers.

In 2015, TASSW started to network with Hong Kong's school social workers, visiting and learning about their achievements of social work in schools. In 2016, TASSW hosted its first international conference where by inviting Korean and Japanese scholars to National Taiwan University, Taipei, to share different concepts and best practices. Currently there are more than 220 school social workers across Taiwan. TASSW expects to provide more training courses and exchange activities. In **Japan**, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) started the school social work project in 2008. In 2009, the University training system for school social workers and certification by Japanese Association for Social Work Education were started. By 2019, 61 Universities offered training. MEXT announced that the number of school social workers would increase to 10,000 by 2019. The School Social Workers Project in Fukuoka Prefecture has been. Active: in 2008, school social workers created the organization as a result of the supervision and in-service training in Fukuoka Prefecture. In 2012, the Fukuoka Association of School Social Workers (FASSW) was established and has been working on in-service training programs, publicity activities, research, international exchange activities and guarantee of status. To date the FASSW is the only professional association for school social workers in Japan.

In **Singapore**, school social work is a collaboration between voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs) and the Government, working together with the various systems such as the students, families and peers to help students reach their potential. In the 1970s, school social work projects were initiated by social workers working in the VWOs. Schools purchase social services from the VWOs for various social work intervention, such as casework, groupwork and outreach. Since the 2010's there is development in school social work in which the Ministry of Education employs full time school social workers to support students' holistic development, in partnership with VWOs.

Asia Network of School Social Work (ANSSW)

When MEXT started school social work projects in 2008, some members of FASSW visited Korea and got a lot of information from KASSW. Then FASSW and KASSW held several joint seminars. In 2016, FASSW and TASSW held a joint conference. Also, KASSW had a relationship with Singapore researchers. From there, FASSW, KASSW and TASSW agreed to play a central part in building the ANSSW, and FASSW decided to host the first International ANSSW Conference.

In Asia, there are common student issues at schools. For example, nonattendance at school, delinquency, child abuse, game addictions, bullying, shut ins, dropouts, child poverty, family problems, etc. Also, there are common themes of school social work practice. For example, case management, home visits or outreach approach, advocacy, communication skills of school social workers, the development of social resources, collaboration of school-family-community, etc. We hope that ANSSW will be a great contribution to the development of school social work in Asia by discussing these student issues and themes, interacting with each other, forging friendships, encouraging, empowering and growing together. The international conference will be held every two years. The 2nd conference will be held in Taiwan in June 2021 hosted by TASSW. The board of ANSSW will be composed of 2-3 persons from each country. The theme of the next conference will be "School Social Work at Rural Sites".

