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SW 495.01: Children and Youth at Risk

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Children and Youth at Risk
Social Work 495
Spring 2002
3 credits
T, Th 12:10-1:30
JRH 203

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Course Description

This course focuses on the aspects of society that pose a threat to today's youth and the ramifications of those threats on youth development and behavior. The course also covers aspects of resilience and protective factors for youth at risk, and strategies to work with those youth. Special attention is given to the related systems and services in Missoula and Montana including juvenile justice, mental health, child protection, substance abuse, and education.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the definition, history, and causes of at risk youth.
2. Identify resilience and protective factors for at risk youth.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the strengths perspective when working with at-risk youth.
4. Examine the effects of past and current public policies on youth.
5. Understand the social context of at risk youth including the influences of family, culture, peers as well as the educational, legal and mental health systems.
6. Identify and incorporate community resources in Missoula that are available for at-risk youth.
7. Understand a systematic approach to working with at-risk youth.

Required Readings

Butterfield, F. (1995). *All of God's children*. New York: Avon.
Humes, E. (1996). *No matter how loud I shout*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
Toth, J. (1998). *Orphans of the living*. New York: Touchstone.

Selected handouts on reserve in the Mansfield Library.

Course handouts.

The readings will be discussed during Thursday's class. Students are expected to have completed the assigned reading and be prepared for discussion.

Grading

Reaction Paper #1	Due 3/7	125 points
Reaction Paper #2	Due 4/16	125 points
Group Proposal	Due 2/26	
Group Project	Due 4/30	200 points
Class participation		50 points
		500 total

451-500 points	A	90-100%
401-450 points	B	80-89%
351-400points	C	70-79%
301-350 points	D	60-69%
0-300 points	F	

Assignments

The group project includes both a written paper and a class presentation. Specific directions will be covered in class and time will be allotted for discussion of the project.

The reaction papers will be four to six pages long. The first paper focuses on the influences of parenting and the Rockdale County video. The second paper is on delinquency and the juvenile justice system. Specific directions will be given out in class.

Classroom Participation

Course sessions include general discussion, case analysis, and practical exercise. Effective work in this course depends on your readiness to share experiences, receive feedback and provide support to others. Active and continuing participation in discussions and exercises is critical. It is essential that you attend and prepare for all class meetings and participate in all course exercises.

Weekly Course Topics

- 1/29 Course Introduction
History of youth at risk
Reading: *All of God's Children*, Part I
- 2/5 Risk and resilience
Strengths Perspective
Reading: *All of God's Children*, Part II
- 2/12 Parenting and Supervision

- Video: The Children of Rockdale County
Reading: *All of God's Children*, Part III
- 2/19 Parenting
Education
Reading: *All of God's Children*, Part IV
- 2/26 Education
Mental Health
John Sommers- Flannigan, Families First
Reading: *No Matter How Loud I Shout*, Part I
- 3/5 Mental Health
Paul Sells, Mental Health Professional
Video: Medicating Kids
Reading: *No Matter How Loud I Shout*, Part II
- 3/12 Delinquency and Youth Violence
Video: Inside the Juvenile Justice System
Reading: *No Matter How Loud I Shout*, Part III
- 3/26 Delinquency and Youth Violence
Brett Gordon and Tom Pinnsenault, Montana Department of Corrections
Reading: *No Matter How Loud I Shout*, Part IV
- 4/2 Substance Abuse
Ann St. Hilliare, St. Patrick Hospital
Reading: *Orphans of the Living*, Part I
- 4/9 Services to At-Risk Children
Missoula Flagship Program
Reading: *Orphans of the Living*, Part II
- 4/16 Services to At-Risk Children
Reading: *Orphans of the Living*, Part III
Geoffrey Birnbaum, Missoula Youth Homes
- 4/23 What Really Influences Youth?
Video: Killer at Thurston High
Reading: *Orphans of the Living*, Part IV
- 4/30 Class Presentations
- 5/8 Class Presentations

Selected References

- Balk, D. (1995). *Adolescent development*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Butterfield, F. (1995). *All of God's children: the Bosket family and the American history of violence*. New York: Avon Books.
- Bruer, J. (1999). *The myth of the first three years*. New York: Free Press.
- Coles, R. (1996). *The moral life of children*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.
- Dryfoos, J.G. (1998). *Safe passage: making it through adolescence in a risky society*. New York: Oxford.
- Elkind, D. (1998). *All grown up and no place to go*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Erikson, E. (1968). *Identity: youth and crisis*. New York: Norton.
- Fraser, M. ed. (1997). *Risk and resilience in children*. Washington, D.C.: NASW.
- Garbarino, J. (1999). *Lost boys*. New York: Free Press.
- Gordon, L. (1999). *The great Arizona orphan abduction*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hine, T. (1999). *The rise and fall of the American teenager*. New York: Avon.
- Hubner, J. & Wolfson, J. (1996). *Somebody else's children*. New York: Three Rivers.
- Lanteri, L. & Patti, J. (1996). *Waging peace in our schools*. Boston: Beacon.
- Lindsey, D. (1994). *The welfare of children*. New York: Oxford.
- Males, M. (1999). *Framing youth: ten myths about the next generation*. Monroe, ME: Common Courage.
- Mcwhirter, J., Mcwhirter, B., Mcwhirter, A., & Mcwhirter, E. (1998). *At-risk youth: a comprehensive response*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks & Cole.
- Rauner, D.M. (2000). *They still pick me up when I fall*. New York: Columbia Press.
- Saleebey, D. ed. (1997). *The strengths perspective in social work practice*. New York: Longman.
- Singer, M., Singer, L., & Anglin, T., eds. (1993). *Handbook for screening adolescents at psychosocial risk*. New York: Lexington.
- Sommers-Flannigan, J., & Sommers-Flannigan, R. (1997). *Tough kids, cool counseling*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Toth, J. (1997). *Orphans of the living*. New York: Touchstone.
- Weissboud, R. (1996). *The vulnerable child*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.