

Does Documentation Matter?



1. Read the documentation of a school social worker A & B
2. Is A or B the better school social worker?

<https://tinyurl.com/5dy4x2cj>



Pupil Services Documentation

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I believe...

- Relationships and connection are most important
- I thrive from creativity & curiosity
- All people have something to teach me

I am knowledgeable about...

- Trauma Sensitive Schools
- WI School Mental Health Framework & MLSS
- Attendance/Truancy
- Child Abuse & Neglect
- Pupil Records
- School Social Work Practice
- Ethics and Boundaries
- Out-of-home Care/ESSA
- Trafficking & Sexual Violence
- Suicide Prevention
- Homelessness

NASW Standards for SSW Services

Accurate

Relevant

Timely

Confidential

Standard 6. Record Keeping

Maintain accurate data and records that are relevant to planning, implementation, and evaluation of school social work services.

Interpretation

School social workers shall maintain timely, accurate, and confidential records that document school social work services, demonstrate outcomes, and promote accountability to the local education agency and community. Records shall be maintained according to federal, state, and local laws.

School Social Worker Code of Ethics

3.04 Client Records

- (a) ...accurate and reflects the services provided
- (b)...sufficient and timely documentation
- (c) ...protect clients' privacy to the extent that is possible and directly relevant to the delivery of services
- (d)...**store records** following the termination of services to ensure reasonable future access

- Also 1.08 Access to Records, 1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality

Accurate

Sufficient

Timely

School Psych Responsible School-Based Record Keeping

**Sufficient
Detail**

**From Reliable
Sources**

**Only What is
Needed for the
Provision of
Services**

- Create and/or maintain school-based psychological and education records with sufficient detail to be useful in decision making by another professional and with sufficient detail to withstand scrutiny if challenged in a due process or other legal procedure.
- Include only documented information from reliable sources in a student's education records.
- School psychologists do not store in student education records any private information about students or their families that is not needed for the provision of school services.

School Counselor Documentation

Ethical use of student data and records

A13 Student Records - b. Advocate for the ethical use of student data and records and inform administration of inappropriate or harmful practices.

A2 Confidentiality - I. Convey a student's highly sensitive information ...through personal contact...and not less-secure means such as a notation in the educational record or an email.

A14 Evaluation, Assessment and Interpretation - i. Conduct and disseminate the results of school counseling program assessments to determine the effectiveness of activities...

SW & Counselor Credential Holders - MPSW

MPSW 20.02(18) Unprofessional Conduct

(18) Failing to maintain adequate records relating to services provided to a client in the course of a professional relationship.

- Clinical records shall be maintained for at least 7 years after the last service provided, unless otherwise provided by state or federal law.

**Adequate
Records
Relating to
Services
Provided**

Purpose of Documentation

- Track and monitor goals
- Accountability
- Improve practice decisions
- Better see connections
- Case coordination
- Case consultation
- Continuation of support during transfers
- Risk management tool
- Evaluate service delivery
- Reflect on case

Barriers to Documentation



Documentation for All?!



[Image from Freepix](#)

- *Ran into student in hallway*
- *Gave a high five to build rapport and encouragement*
- *Affect was positive and energetic*
- *Plan is to give another high five next week*
- *In last 2 months we have given 150% more high fives than 2 months prior*



Basic Content for Documentation

- Needs, strengths (baseline)
- Goals/Plan
- Team members and roles
- Progress

(Kagle & Koepels, 2008)



Ethical Records



“Ethical records are clear, logical, factual, well organized, and well written” (Kagle & Kopels, 2008).

What Not to Include

- Bias
- Jargon
- Gossip
- Hunches
- Your “diagnosis”
- Untrue information
- Irrelevant or intimate details
- Info that could be used against a student or caregiver
- Negative statements about employer
- Negative statements about colleagues



(Kagle & Koepels, 2008; Raines 2004; Reamer 2005)

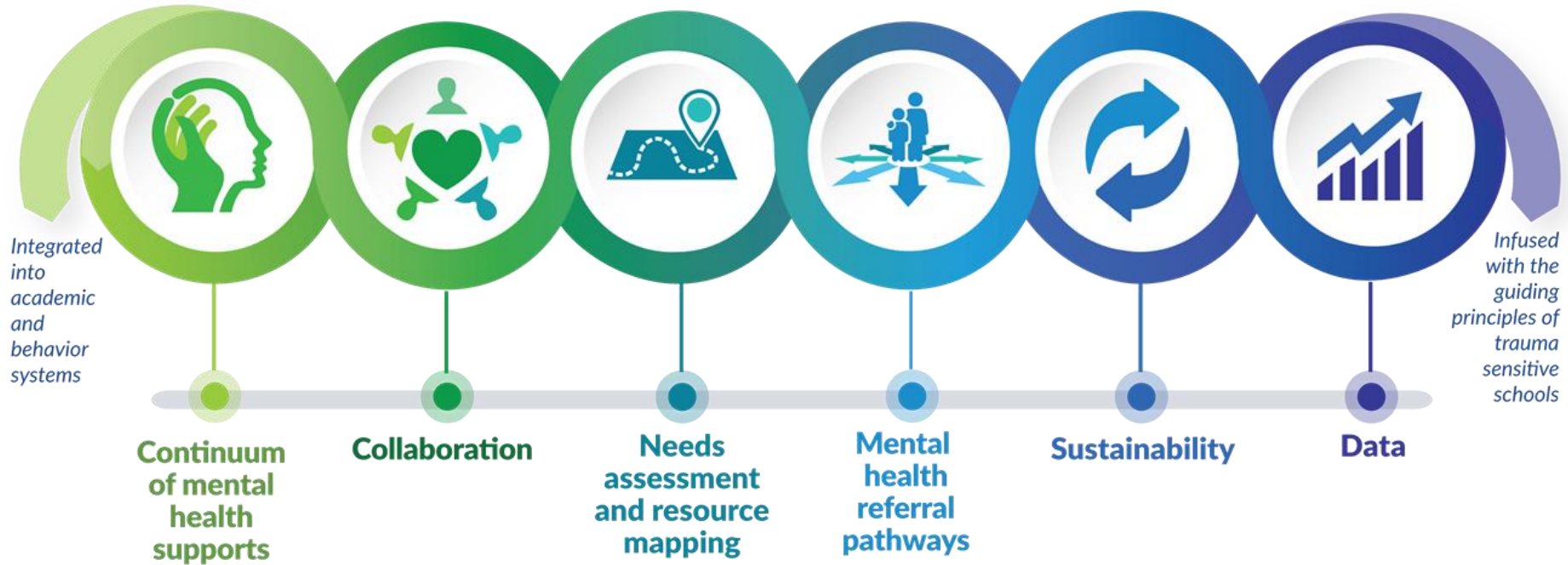
Tips on Documentation



- **Keep it simple, clear, and concise**
- **Timley**
- **Professional**
- **Ask, “Is the info relevant to the student’s education?”**
- **Create a form for routine information?**
- **Be able to back up claims with evidence**
- **Follow school policies**
- **Consider how to maintain appropriate confidentiality**

(Garrett 2012; Kagle & Kopels, 2008; Reamer 2005)

Wisconsin's Comprehensive School Mental Health Framework



Parents as Partners

When the parent requests records they should see themselves reflected as a partner based on what you are writing down about this student



Example of Documentation

Example of School Social Work Documentation Pupil Services Documentation Workshop

Considerations for Content:

1. Needs, strengths (baseline)
2. Goals/Plan
3. Team members and roles
4. Progress

Example of documentation after a single session with Sasha:

- **Needs/strengths**
 - She was energetic and engaged during the session. She said she noticed that her “cheeks felt hot” when she was frustrated in math class even before Ms. Nicely mentioned it.
- **Plan/Progress**
 - Completed Zones lesson 3. I still need to get mom’s input on the emotional regulation plan.

Is it a Pupil Record?



**Directly Related to
a Student?**

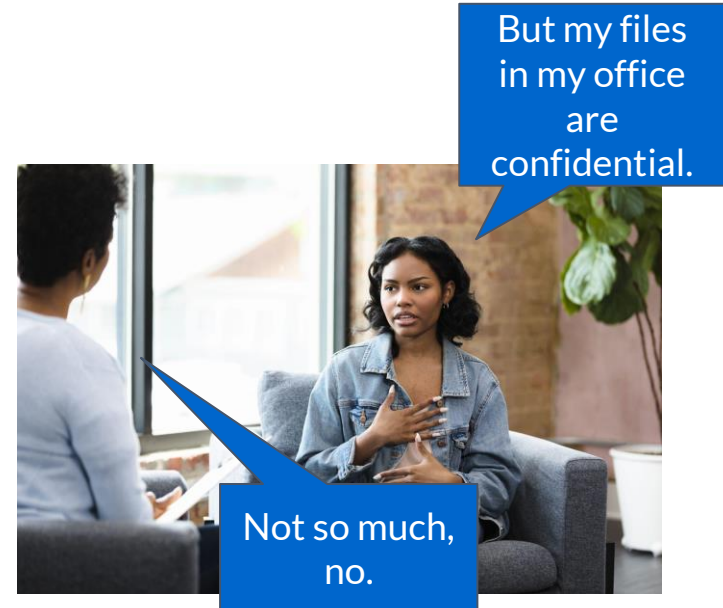


**Maintained by or
for the school?**

With a few exceptions

Sole Possession vs Pupil Record

- Notes maintained for personal use, not shared with others, used only as a personal memory aid
- Where they are maintained does not matter



Access to Sole Possession Records



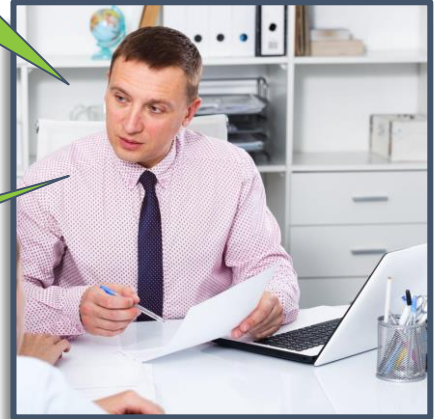
- **FERPA exists to ensure parents have access to educational records & to keep records confidential**
- **Personal notes may be subpoenaed during legal proceedings** (ASCA 2023; Kagle & Kopels 2008; Garret 2012)

Subpoenas

- Various laws, policies, standards: FERPA, 118.125, 146.81, 51.30, NASW Standard 1.07 (j), ASCA A.2.,
- If student records are subpoenaed, the most prudent approach is to contact the school district's legal counsel for guidance

Do not
ignore it!

Try to
quash it.



ASCA Responsibility to Students:

A.13. Student Records

- **f. Establish a reasonable timeline for purging sole-possession records or case notes.**
 - Suggested guidelines include shredding paper or deleting electronic sole possession records when a student
 - transitions to the next level,
 - transfers to another school or
 - graduates.
 - School counselors do not destroy sole-possession records that may be needed by a court of law, such as notes on child abuse, suicide, sexual harassment or violence, without prior review and approval by school district legal counsel....

Where Do I Store My Documentation?



Teaming for Students

ENEMY?



Staff and School Official Access

“legitimate educational interest”

Sec. 99.31(a)(1)(ii) FERPA; Wis. Stat. 118.125(2)(d)

Does this person
need this information
to do their job?



Professional Ethics

- Obtain consent and assent prior to disclosing client information
- (broadly speaking) except for in emergency situations

Do they have authorization and/or a legitimate educational interest?

Did I obtain consent and assent?

Talking to Staff

Tell me how that information

- **will help you do your job?**
- **will change how you do you do your job?**
- **will change how you support this student?**
- **will benefit the student?**
- **can be shared in a way that both respects the student's privacy and gives you what you need to support the student?**

Considerations in Disclosure

Keep in mind:

1. What's legal?
2. What's ethical?
3. What's in the student's best interest?
4. Who needs to know?
5. How will you document it?
6. Is there a way to stall to give yourself time to consult?
7. Would you feel comfortable explaining your actions to others?
8. What information do they need to do their job?
9. Is it necessary?

Disclosure -NASW Practice Update 2001

Questions to Ask

1. Why is it important that this information be shared?
2. How will the student and the student's family benefit by a decision to share or not share information?
3. Does sharing the confidential information outweigh maintaining confidentiality?
4. What will be the effect on the student's learning?



**I STILL HAVE
SO MANY
QUESTIONS.**


Reflection and Discussion

What's coming up for you as we discuss documentation?

What first step could you take to improve practices?



PPRA and Consent

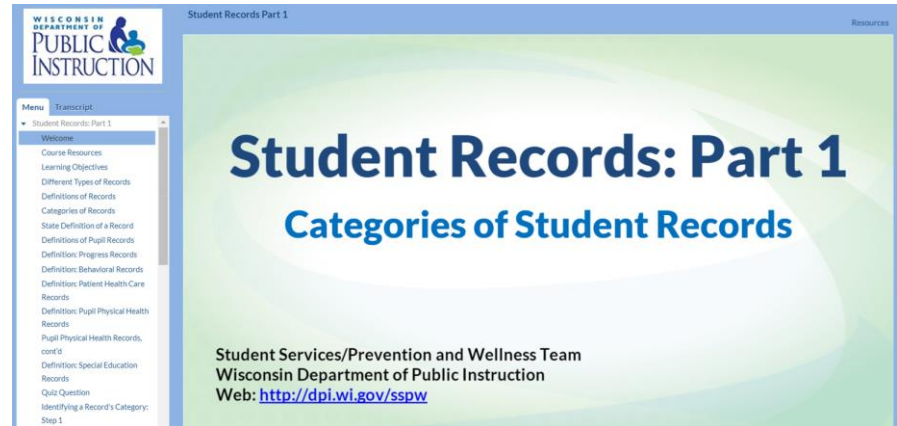
- [34 CFR PART 98 Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment \(PPRA\)](#)
 - [Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment \(PPRA\) General Guidance \(USDOE\)](#)
 - [Filing a Complaint - PPRA \(USDOE\)](#)
 - [Assessment and Social, Emotional, and Behavioral \(SEB\) Screening and Assessment \(DPI\)](#)
 - [Consent and Notification in a Multi-level System of Support Document \(DPI\) \(recently updated\)](#)
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Records and Documentation Guidance

- [ASCA Case Notes/Student Records Guidance](#)
- [ASCA Magazine - Parental Rights and Information](#)

Review the Basics Any Time!

- Online modules for basic understanding:
<https://dpi.wi.gov/wise/data-privacy/training>
- Publications:
 - [Student Records and Confidentiality](#) (2018 version)
 - [Sharing Information Across Systems](#) (2018 version)
- [DPI Webpages with Links to Resources](#) (HIPPA v FERPA)



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