



National Association of Professional Social Workers in India (NAPSWI)

5th NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK WEEK 2024

(August 15 to August 21, 2024)

About National Social Work Week (NSWW)

NAPSWI has initiated a weeklong celebration as the National Social Work Week to fulfil the long pending demand of National Social Work Day on the lines of Global Social Work Day. After discussion, it was decided to celebrate a 'NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK WEEK' (NSWW) from 15th to 21st August every year. The idea of the celebrating NSWW is centered around "to highlights the development and achievements social work profession in India; to take pride belonging to this noble profession; to rededicate ourselves for the societal cause; and to look at the bright side as well as the dark side of the profession with intention of co creating opportunities of mutual learning and empowering each other." During the Social work Week, we will jointly make an attempt to bring all the professional social workers on one platform, so that a collective identity of the profession can be emerged in the most efficient manner on one hand and mutual learning can take place on other. This one-week celebration begins on 15th August and culminates as Indian Social Work Day on 21st August every year. Since it was initiated during the pandemic situation in 2020, the first celebration came through virtual mode. It has been a great success as many social work educational institutions (SWEI), social work professionals, educators, researchers, practitioners, students, and even common people from different walks of life have join hands across the country to undertake, organize and facilitate academic and professional interaction through various activities. It coincides with the establishment of first school of social work in Independent India with blessings of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Department of Social work, Kashi Vidyapith coordinated the 1st NSWW programme in 2020 in collaboration with National Association of Professional Social Workers in India (NAPSWI) and Indian Society of Professional Social Work (ISPSW) and organized a series of activities. In 2021, NAPSWI itself had shouldered responsibility to organize a series of activities during the 2nd NSWW programme. In 2022, NAPSWI had expanded it and supported SWEIs across the country to observe and celebrate 3rd NSWW programme by organizing a series of activities virtually or physically or in a blended mode whichever was possible. Last year, 4th NSWW programme was observed throughout the country on the issue

of *Green Social Work* was the focus. Prof Atul Pratap Singh of Delhi University along with team of NAPSWI has successfully coordinated 2nd to 4th NSSW.

Like past years, this year 5th NSSW will be celebrated from August 15 to 21, 2023 and the last day of NSSW (August 21, 2024) shall be celebrated as 'Indian Social Work Day'. Actually, NAPSWI believes in shaking hands with all the social work educational institutions, so that it can promote and protect the interest of social work profession in India and represent social work professionals and profession at national and international level. Hence, in order to cooperate and collaborate in a partnership mode, social work education institutions (SWEIs) are invited to join hands with us in this a week National level event.

Specific Objectives of NSWW

The main aim of celebration of NSWW programme is to promote social work education and social work profession; popularize the values, mission and goals of social work profession; and re-affirm the commitments for personal and social wellbeing of every citizen of our country. The specific objectives of the NSWW programme are as follows:

1. To inculcate work values and social responsibility among the social work educators, students, practitioners across the country;
2. To evoke participation and engagement of all stakeholders throughout the country by organizing a series of activities;
3. To highlights the need and significance of social work profession in India and to look at the bright side as well as the dark side of the profession with intention of co creating opportunities of mutual learning and empowering each others, and
4. To co-operate and collaborate with SWEIs and support them in various activities in a partnership mode.

Proposed theme for 5th NSWW

This year, our theme for 5th NSWW will be '**School Social Work: Opportunities and Challenges**' which has emerged due to the place to school social work and school complex in new education policy 2020. **This year, we have decided to focus on School Social Work** Besides this, some of the themes that can be taken up are: 'Social Work and Contemporary Social Realities', 'National Education Policy and Social work', 'School Social Work Values and Ethics', 'School Social work activities for teachers, students and parents as well as for schools', or any other theme relevant for Social Work Profession.

School Social Work: Opportunities and Challenges

National Association of Professional Social Workers in India has initiated a campaign to establish school complex and appointment of school social workers in schools in 2019-20. In India, professional social workers have been employed in various government, private, and non-government organisations (NGOs) since past many decades. For the last eight decades, we have been working on diverse issues related to different groups of population with the

objective of promoting the well-being of human beings. Social work as a subject is being taught at graduate and post graduate level throughout the country in 526 colleges/universities and produces a large trained social service work force for many fields. Social work is an academic discipline and human service profession that concerns itself with individuals, families, groups and communities in an effort to enhance social functioning and overall well-being. A school social worker provides psycho-social services and support, counseling to children and adolescents in schools at both micro and macro levels. School social workers are addressing students' issues, concerns and problems on one hand and they align with peers, teachers, school, and community especially with parents on other. These professionals are not only working on crisis intervention, problem solving, developmental needs. Besides health and mental health issues, they take care of social and emotional development and well being of the school children, school community, family-school liaisons, and program development. In already prevailing situation as depicted by the content analysis of media reports on schools and school children in the last few years reveals a sharp increase in the number of cases of child abuse, stress and anxiety related disorders, violence, and even suicide among these children. Interestingly, these changes are not restricted to only urban spaces but have also been reported from rural areas. Information and Telecommunication (IT) revolution has made the situation even grimmer. The weakening of the traditional family system which was a major support system for these children has further exacerbated the situation by increasing their vulnerabilities and reducing their ability to cope with the stressors.

Our important policy documents on education including the National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005) and the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA, 2012) have laid emphasis on guidance and counselling at school level. It is noteworthy that in the context of Indian school education 'guidance and counselling' has remained restricted to employment counselling. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT, 2015) in its guidelines has also stressed upon the need to address the problems/crises faced by students '*in their academic, social, emotional and personal lives*'. It mentions that such interventions should be '*based on the expressed needs, concerns of the students as well as aligned to the needs and demands of the students' immediate socio-economic and political environment*'. Further, the proposed Draft New Education Policy 2019, has recommended hiring school social workers in the context of urban poor. It commits *the introduction of counsellors and social workers into the schooling system* (chapter 2 ,page 58); *Adequate numbers of social workers will be appointed to the school complexes* depending on the student population and the population of adult learners in that geography(P7.2.3, page 162); *School and school complex counsellors and social workers will be trained* to confidentially advise parents and teachers on adolescent problems faced by growing boys and girls(P8.6.7,page 197) and the Draft Policy puts emphasis on role of social workers.

New Education Policy 2020 states that

“Trained and qualified social workers from civil society organizations/departments of Social Justices and Empowerment could be connected to the schools through various innovative mechanisms to be adopted by State/UT Governments. (Sec 2.5).

“Children are unable to learn optimally when they are undernourished or unwell. Hence, the nutrition and health (including mental health) of children will be addressed, through healthy meals and the introduction of well-trained social workers, counsellors and community involvement into the schooling system, as well as through various continuing measures for addressing poverty that may lie beyond the education system. (Para 2.7).”

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“One possible mechanism for accomplishing the above would be the establishment of school complexes/clusters (Para 7.6)”

“The aim of the school complex/cluster will be to a) build vibrant communities of teachers, school leaders, and other supporting staff; b) better integrate education across all school levels, from early childhood education through Grade 12, as well as vocational and adult education; c) share key material resources, such as libraries, science laboratories and equipment, computer labs, sports facilities and equipment, as well as human resources, such as social workers,.....(Para7.7)”

‘.....to ensure the participation of community members in adult education. Social workers travelling through their communities to track and ensure participation of non-enrolled students and dropouts...(Para 21.8).

In the light of the above and available researches, the need of school social workers in schools is undisputedly accepted in favour of the children, families, school and society. Professional social workers as School Social Workers are and will be an effective institution of preventing student related problems and promoting most student related issues in the schools. The school complex is required more sincerely in view of COVID 19 pandemic to combat post pandemic problems of school children. This is the most appropriate time to start school complex. Having appreciation for policy makers to recognize the potentials of trained and qualified professional social workers, we at NAPSWI wish to engage all possible stakeholders and urge up on State/Central government to establish school complex and initiating the process of appointment of the School Social Workers as envisaged in National Education Policy.

Proposed Activities for 5th NSWW

There is no restriction on the activities as the sky is your limit. Individual, group or collective forms of activities can be organized for the purpose of awareness, education, training, or capacity building, advocating policy changes under the 5th NSWW programme. In fact, the social work education institutions (SWEIs) need to connect together and with people. Hence, they can organize the discussion, debates, educational games, quizzes, workshops,

masterclass, panel discussion, seminars, poster making, capacity building, experience sharing, cultural and social activities, film screening, storytelling, etc. in online or offline or blended mode. More specifically, some of the proposed activities are as follows:

1. Seminar on 'School Social Work: Opportunities, Challenges and Issues'
2. Masterclass on 'Methodologies and Useful Techniques of School Social Work'
3. Workshop on 'National education Policy and School social Work: Proposing An action Plan'
4. Workshop on 'Field Work Practice-Learning on School social work'
5. Seminar on 'Children in Schools: Issues and Challenges'
6. Workshop on 'Child Abuse, Health and Wellness'
7. Workshop on 'Laws for Children'
8. Panel Discussion on 'Youth in India: Challenges and Opportunities'
9. Capacity Building Workshop on 'How to protect and promote Healthy Children'
10. Workshops on issues related to "Gender Social Work", "Women Social Work"
11. Documenting Institutional, local, regional level issues or research studies
12. Workshop/Seminar/Round Table Conference on Role of Social Workers in School Social Work
13. Workshop/Seminar on Disaster
14. Workshop/Seminar on School Social Work and Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs)

The above proposed activities are suggestive only. The social work education institutions (SWEIs) may organize any activity of their choice during the 3rd NSWW as finalized at Faculty or Department level.

About the NAPSWI

National Association of Professional Social Workers in India (NAPSWI) is a non-profit, non-political, national level organization dedicated to the promotion of standards and enhancement of the status of the social work profession. It is one of the largest associations of social work professionals in India. NAPSWI has been making attempts to bring professional social workers on one platform, so that a collectively identity of the profession could emerge. It intends to fulfil the twin purposes of promoting the social work profession within the country together with safeguarding and protecting the interests of social work professionals. NAPSWI has number of activities which include organizing Indian Social Work Congress (ISWC) every year, publications of books, a professional journal of Social Work Education, Research and Action (SWERA), annual Resource Book on Social work educational institutions, organizing discussions/symposium/debates, granting awards, advocacy, liasioning, networking, academic support, membership services etc. NAPSWI has recently granted special consultative status by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations (UN).

Host Institution

Any school of social work, faculty/department of Central & State universities, professional associations, alumni associations may observe and celebrate NSWW programme.

Knowledge Partnership

NAPSWI will be happy to support and collaborate with the social work education institutions (SWEIs) across the country in a knowledge partnership mode.

Participants

In the NSWW programme, delegates and participants from SWEIs, Universities & colleges, voluntary organizations, government organizations will participate. Besides, the participation in the programme will be made from all over the country including - academicians; developmental policy planners/makers and administrators; representatives of civil society - NGOs, media, social and development activists, funding organizations etc.; practitioners in the field of social research & development and advocacy; research scholars; and students.

Venue

The social work education institutions (SWEIs) across the country may organize 5th NSWW virtually or physically or in a blended mode as per their own convenience.

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