



SOCIAL JUSTICE: ADVOCACY & ETHICS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES & Professional Practice



Dr. Brian L. Christenson, LMSW,
Associate Professor




The Social Work Profession


- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGGIKZE0deU&feature=player_embedded

When Does a Problem Exist?

- A community problem exists when ordinary citizens can convince high profile individuals (public officials, agency executives, business leaders) that a condition exists or persists




Advocacy Takes...



- Careful planning.
- Obtaining more information from your client(s), stakeholders, and third parties regarding their situation(s) and experiences. Interviews & Surveys.
- Document facts & relevant information.
- Conducting a review of the literature and current research.
- Researching laws and policy.
- Networking, taking action, confidence, and time.
- National Association of Social Workers Advocacy Resources: <http://www.naswdc.org/advocacy/default.asp>
- Child Welfare League of America Advocacy Resources: <http://www.cwla.org/advocacy/default.htm>


NASW Code of Ethics

National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics. (1999). Code of ethics of the national association of social workers. <http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/code.asp>




Understand & Identify the Background of the Problem while concurrently Defining the Problem

- Research, agency reports, government reports, census data, etc...
- One resources: www.lcsc.edu/bchristenson
- Lack of appropriate ...
- Rise in ...
- Concerns about ...
- Impact on...
- Need for...




Obtain & Examine Key Facts & Relevant Information

- Nationally,...
- In Idaho...
- Locally...




Obtaining Facts & Relevant Information

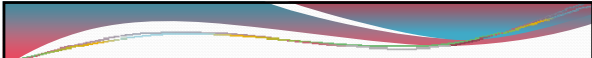
- "In 2006, an estimated 20.4 million Americans aged 12 or older were current (past month) illicit drug users, meaning they had used an illicit drug during the month prior to the survey interview. This estimate represents 8.3 percent of the population aged 12 years or older. Illicit drugs include marijuana/hashish, cocaine (including crack), heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, or prescription prescription-type psychotherapeutics used nonmedically" (Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, 2007, p.1).
- "In 2006, the number of persons aged 12 or older needing treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol use problem was 23.6 million (9.6 percent of the population aged 12 or older). Of these, 2.5 million (1.0 percent of persons aged 12 or older and 10.8 percent of those who needed treatment) received treatment at a specialty facility. Thus, there were 21.1 million persons (8.6 percent of the population aged 12 or older) who needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol use problem but did not receive treatment at a specialty substance abuse facility in the past year (Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, 2007, p.6).



Idaho State Percentage of Population: Source: SAMHSA, 2005


- Past Month Illicit Drug Use: 12 or older- 6.98% of the population
- Past year 12 or older needing but not receiving treatment-2.65% of the population
- A total of 38% who need treatment in Idaho, are not receiving treatment for various reasons that include....





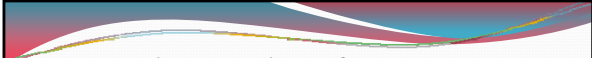
Idaho HOUSE BILL NO. 516

- "STATEMENT OF PURPOSE RS 17856 C1 The purpose of this legislation is to provide treatment focused alternative sentencing for certain mandatory minimum sentences. This legislation will allow judges, where appropriate, to sentence those whose crime was primarily the result of addiction, to a treatment focused track so as to more effectively rehabilitate offenders, reduce recidivism and slow growth in Idaho's non-violent offender population.
- (d) A person guilty of an offense determined by the court to be primarily the result of addiction may be sentenced pursuant to section 19-2513, 13 Idaho Code, if a treatment plan pursuant to section 19-2524, Idaho Code, is 14 included as a condition of the sentence" (<http://www3.state.id.us/oasis/H0516.html>).



Analyze & Report the Future Consequences of the Problem without the Current Policy and or Proposed Changes

- Continued increase in...
- Impact on...
- Impact on the adult justice system including law enforcement, courts, agencies, and institutions
- Increase in...
- Impact of treatment vs. impact without treatment.... Reports, statistics, etc...



Immediate Plan for Action

- Mobilize State and Community Contacts: Request a meeting with your government representatives and congressmen regarding the issue(s). Have a goal of sponsorship.
- Educate, educate, education. Using facts and relevant information. Know your members of Congress at the Federal & State level. <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/howtocontactlegislators.htm>
- Write/send a letter/e-mail/fax to your representatives and congressmen regarding the issue as it pertains to current legislative proposals (pro/con) = Use NASW CapWiz system- <http://www.cwla.org> <http://www.naswdc.org> <http://www.naswidaho.org>
- Visit with them on the telephone and in person.
- Hold a community forum
- Write a letter to the editor

Action Continued...

- Create a coalition
- Set up telephone trees
- Get on the agenda at meetings, conferences, etc.
- Work with interested organizations and individuals
- Get the word out in the community through a letter to the newspaper/radio/and television media sources (Be sure to provide resources for additional information and offer suggestions for action) This also includes letters in school news papers, church newsletters, local websites, etc...
- You will not be listened to if you don't have a viable plan of action.
- Remember, this is just one level. This model can be used on a local, state, and federal level.

(Christenson, 2008, CWLA, 2008).

Class Legislative Advocacy Activity

- Give a brief overview of the policy and proposed changes
- Identify the ethical issues/concerns
- Understand, Identify, and Report the Background of the Problem while concurrently Defining the Problem (relate it to our community)
- Analyze & Report the Future Consequences of the Problem without the Current Policy and or Proposed Changes. Tie it to ethics.....
- Take a Stand from Proposed Changes and Present your Stance based from the NASW code of ethics...
- Present a Proposed Immediate Plan for Action including Goals, Objectives, Action Steps (methods/activities) following the SMART model-

References

- Child Welfare League of America Advocacy Resources: <http://www.cwla.org/advocacy/default.htm>
- Child Welfare League of America. (2008). CWLA's advocacy tips. <http://www.cwla.org/printable/printpage.asp>
- Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration. (2007). Results from the 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings. Retrieved February 26, 2008 from <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/2k6/nadu/2k6Results.pdf>
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