1. Child & Adolescent Issues/Parenting

Moderator: Darius Skowronski

Oct. 23, Saturday [12:30 ~ 14:00]

OP 1-3

The process of building a cooperative relationship between school and family by school social workers

AUTHOR(S)

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ABSTRACT

Objective: In recent years, many issues surrounding children, such as school refusal, bullying, and delinquency, have been addressed. Children's problems are often complicated by issues in the family system and the school system, and it is significant to treat the school in the same way as the family in school settings where all children attend. I believe that it is important for social workers to work with both systems.

In this study, School Social Workers (hereinafter referred to as " SSWs ") will focus on families and schools to clarify the process of solving children's problems and demonstrate that approaching both families and schools from a structural perspective can help children's difficult situations, solve problems early, and prevent recurrence.

Through qualitative analysis of the interview data, we aim to clarify the process of how SSWs connect the uncooperative families and schools, and how SSWs bring about changes and solutions in the family and school systems.

Methods: From June 2017 to March 2019, we conducted an interview survey (semi-structured interview) with 9 SSWs who have a structural perspective and are working with their families and schools. The main questions were: 1) who and how did you work with in order to build relationships with schools and families, 2) what did you focus on and how did you work with families and schools in difficult cases, and 3) what points did you think led to solutions, etc. Analysis was performed by the qualitative data analysis method of Sato (2008) using MAXQDA11 (Release 11.11).

Ethical considerations: Approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Department of Social Welfare, Graduate School of Human Sociology, Osaka Prefecture University. Specifically, I informed them of the purpose and intent of the study, and explained that cooperation with the survey was voluntary, that they could withdraw while the study, and that there would be no disadvantage in doing so. In addition, personal information obtained from the survey was anonymized so that it could not be identified, and consideration was given to protecting privacy, such as not using the data for purposes other than research, and consent was obtained.

Results: The first is to [promote what SSWs can do] what is beneficial to schools and families so that they can understand SSW itself. Since each worker has different strengths, self-awareness will be required. SSWs can help students quickly understand that they are part of the school and family. It is possible to build a trusting relationship at an early stage by [tuning] in the initial interview, such as performing the same actions at the same time.

[Focusing the solution] to the family and the school means asking questions that can imagine the goal and << telling the prospect of improvement >> (image of the completed drawing).

"Being a member of both" means that SSWs are also considered as a part of each system,and on the surface, it may seem that SSWs are not neutral, as they can be on the side of the school or the family but having the objectivity to be on both sides is essential for coordinating relationships between children, families, and schools.

  With an awareness of connecting both the family and the school, the concept of "exaggerating the feelings" was put forward to connect the family, the school, and the family and the school. "XX talked about each other's strength in this way, "and so on, by "expressing his feelings exaggeratedly", he used the method of telling both parties with a little addition.

  In difficult cases, there is a gap between the family and the school, and the gap deepens as the misunderstanding between the two parties increases. To bridge the gap, it is an important role of SSWs to "interpret the gap" and "interpret the thoughts of each person" by intervening in the thoughts of each person, and to resolve the misunderstanding.

  There was also a concept of setting small goals together with children, families, and schools, and communicating the goals to both sides so that they would face the same direction, such as "school and family share the same goals" to break the vicious circle. Furthermore, sharing the same goals between the school and the family will strengthen the collaborative relationship and lead to trust in both parties. In the meantime, it is important for SSWs to have the same school goals and family goals and to keep pace.

Conclusion: To connect families and schools, SSWs see each issue as part of a whole system, and to make a change in the situation described as a problem, they look at where and how to work to make the system work. They started with the places that seemed easy to get into and approached those that seemed to work. It is only SSWs to embody and visualize the invisible and become part of the school system and family system.

The 9 SSWs interviewed encountered various difficult cases. In difficult cases, there are many complex problems, which creates a vicious cycle and sometimes it is difficult to get out of it. SSWs first organized the difficulties one by one, and repeated dialogues with family and school, such as disclosing oneself so that the problem could be viewed objectively. In the dialogue, SSWs finds the strengths of the school and the family, focuses on the strengths, and works together as a partner to set goals so that they can exert their strengths.

By accumulating these, the school / family can grasp what is the focus of the problem, think together with SSWs, organize each issue, and work together. Families and schools can find value and meaning in the experience. By intervening between the two and sharing that value, SSWs creates new value, changes the system, and the case goes to a solution.

SSWs can transform a vicious cycle into a virtuous cycle in any case by firmly building the structure of the school system and family system, valuing the hardships, and supporting them to function from there.

The limitation of this research is mainly the subject of qualitative research. Specifically, the number of research collaborators is as small as 9. As a future research topic, it is necessary to expand the scope of the survey, such as SSWs without a structural perspective, schools, and families, and analyze and compare them. Furthermore, further research is required, such as conducting quantitative research based on the concepts generated in this research.

Keywords:School social work, family system, school system