

The Masonic Model Student Assistance Program



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Grand Lodge of F&AM of Ohio

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MMSAP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Student Assistance Programs (SAP) are the primary vehicle for schools in Pennsylvania and across our nation for addressing students' behavioral health needs and concerns. SAP links students to behavioral health care services both in schools and in the community. Student Assistance Programs address the barriers to learning due to social, emotional and mental health concerns. One such program is the Masonic Model Student Assistance Program (MMSAP) which began in Pennsylvania in 1984. The Masonic Model Student Assistance Program is designed to address school-based concerns of academics, attendance, health and behavior in students. Our MMSAP trained core teams are specifically trained to deal with substance use and abuse, depression and suicide and school violence.

The following is an Executive Summary of the latest and most comprehensive evaluation of Student Assistance Programs. The research was conducted by Dr. Carl Fertman, University of Pittsburgh and published in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, November 2003.

In this current study a number of significant conclusions can be documented.

THE LEVEL OF NEED OF AMERICA'S YOUTH

1. One out of four of America's youth is extremely vulnerable and another 1 out of 4 is moderately vulnerable to the negative consequences of engaging in multiple high risk social and health behaviors.
2. Concerns and problems concerning today's families and youth are often too intimidating for families and youths to solve on their own.
3. Eight out of ten of American youth are in need of behavioral health services and may not receive them. (US Surgeon General 2001)

ROLE AND PURPOSE OF STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

1. Student Assistance Programs confront the barriers to learning faced by students engaging in multiple high-risk social and health behaviors.
2. Student Assistance Programs link children and families to the behavioral health care system, providing the mechanism for schools, communities, families and youth to work together to remove the barriers to learning.
3. Consistently, 9 out of 10 of the students referred were linked to a school program and service with most accessing the recommended service.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

1. Overall, the proportion of students having their needs met through SAP far exceeds the nationally reported findings for youth in need of behavioral health care who, for the most part, do not receive them. (US Surgeon General, 2001)
2. Students referred to Student Assistance Programs show improved attendance, a decrease in discipline problems, and positive academic promotion and graduation after their SAP referral and intervention.
 - a. Two out of three referred students improved and stabilized their attendance.
 - b. Approximately 7 out of 10 referred students were either promoted or graduated from high school.
 - c. Two out of three referred students showed reduction in suspensions and positive behavior changes.
3. There is a strong relationship between decreased student drug use and the presence of a Student Assistance team in school. (Scott, Surface, Friedli & Barlow, 1999)
4. A majority of the students that are linked to community services by Student Assistance teams for assessment, access some if not all the recommended services.

We can emphatically report that Student Assistance Programs positively contributes to student academic success and achievement. Student Assistance Programs greatly enhance the relationship between youth and behavioral health care providers. Student Assistance Programs help to create healthy youth and a healthy future America.

REFERENCES

Fertman, Tarasevich, Hepler (2003) RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OUTCOME DATA.

Ringel & Strum (2001) JOURNAL OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES AND RESEARCH

United States Surgeon General (2001) US PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE REPORT OF THE SURGEON GENERAL

Scott, Surface, Friedli, Barlow (1999) JOURNAL OF DRUG EDUCATION

FACILITY

The Ohio Masonic Model Student Assistance Program workshops have been held all over the state. The facilities that are normally used include the Ohio Masonic Home in Springfield, and the Grand Lodge Building in Worthington. Trainings have also been held in Hiram Masonic Lodge in Delaware, the Masonic Center in Toledo, and Craftsmen Park in Akron.

The Masonic Model Student Assistance Program workshops can be held locally to promote Lodge involvement in the community, or they can be held at one of the sites listed above.

HISTORY

The program model, which is adopted from the highly acclaimed National Masonic Model Student Assistance Program, seeks to enhance the skills and linkages of existing human resources in the schools and their local community. The objective is early and effective intervention with students demonstrating patterns of behavior which could threaten their success at school and be indicators of problems associated with substance abuse.

The family of Freemasonry has been actively involved in the funding of the Masonic Model Student Assistance Team training since the founding of the National Masonic Foundation for Children in 1985.

The foundation adopted the nationally-acclaimed Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program Model through its association with the two educators who developed the model and their extensive experience in training with the model in cooperation with the Masonic Charities of Pennsylvania. In 1986, the Maryland State Board of Education and the Masonic Charities of Maryland began a similar cooperative effort. The State of Illinois followed in 1989. California launched its program in 1994 and Ohio started its program in 1997. As of 2003, 26 states have started using the Masonic Model Student Assistance Program.

TRAINING AGENDA

DAY 1 8:00 – 8:30 am.....Registration and continental breakfast
Please be prompt
8:30 – 12:00 noon.....Welcome and introductions
Opening activities
Agenda setting
Masonic student assistance program overview
12:00 – 1:00 pm.....Lunch
1:00 – 4:00 pm.....Chemical dependency
Depression and suicide
4:00 – 5:30 pm.....Communication skills: The key to intervention
Wrap up day one

DAY 2 8:00 – 8:30 am.....Continental breakfast
8:30 – 12:00 noon.....Opening activities
The dynamics of families in pain
Enabling/co-dependency
12:00 – 1:00 pm.....Lunch
1:00 – 4:00 pm.....Treatment/recovery/aftercare
Life skills
4:00 – 5:30 pm.....Building a successful core team
Wrap up day two

DAY 3 8:00 – 8:30 am.....Continental breakfast
8:30 – 12:00 noon.....The student assistance process
Case studies
12:00 – 1:00 pm.....Lunch
1:00 – 2:30 pm.....Action planning for successful implementation
Large group closure

TEAM SELECTION CRITERIA

This valuable training is designed for school personnel (K-12). In order for the Masonic Model Student Assistance Program to make a successful impact in the schools, we need the “Right People for The Job”.

Two distinct groups make up MMSAP participants. One would be the “Observers”. They are here to actively participate and take the information back to their respective school districts. Second are “Core Teams”. They represent educators within a school building within a district. Districts may send a maximum of 2 “observers” and 5-8 “Core team” members per school.

The “Core Team” members should include:

- one central office administrator/SAT mentor
- one building administrator
- one or more counselors
- two or more teachers regular education/special education
- one school nurse, school psychologist, in-school suspension coordinator
- one drug and alcohol service provider, and/or mental health service provider

GENERAL INFORMATION

Welcome to our Masonic Student Assistance Program. Common questions asked from previous participants are:

1. Keys to Success: We know that preparation and commitment are the keys to successful program implementation. Participating schools are encouraged to: identify building “core team” members, provide time for weekly 1 hour team meetings, 3-7 hours of faculty in service within the first year of program implementation, minimally one half day in service for the team with 3 months of training. Support from the local school board, superintendent and the local providers of mental health and drug and alcohol services is essential for this program to be successful.
2. Training Costs: Training, meals, and lodging costs (if necessary) will be covered by the Grand Lodge of Ohio Charitable Foundation - Masonic Model Student Assistance Program. (Substitute costs will be the responsibility of the school district.)
3. Class Time Schedules: Participants need to make a total commitment of their time for all three days of the seminar. The hours will be from 8:30 a.m. to approximately 5:30 p.m. for the first two days and from 8:30 a.m. to approximately 2:30 p.m. on the final day. Breakfast and lunch will be served on

campus each of the three days. As meals and training are tightly scheduled, participants should not go off campus for these meals.

4. **Travel Arrangements:** Teams are encouraged to car pool to the workshop. You will need your vehicles to travel between the motel and the training site each day. We do not reimburse for mileage. You may choose to arrive the morning of the first session, which begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. (Continental breakfast begins at 8 a.m.) If you come the evening before the conference begins, it will be up to you to notify Mark Bernardin at the Grand Lodge (800-292-6092, or email mark@freemason.com) to reserve an extra night, which is offered at no charge to the school.
5. **Lodging Information:** You will be advised of the motel being used when you submit your team names and are officially registered. New motel properties are being developed, and the Program managers will select the best site available at the time.
6. **Registration Information:** All contact should be to Mark Bernardin at the Grand Lodge in Worthington. Phone 800-292-6092 Fax 614-885-5319 Email mark@freemason.com