

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

A Student Assistance Program is a school-based, organized system for prevention, identification and intervention for students with identified needs that may affect school performance and healthy development.

A basic Student Assistance Program includes a Student Assistance Team; methods for identifying and screening identified needs; appropriate referrals; and various strategies for supporting students' needs.

... for decades, educators have been guided by risk-deficit view of students. This view promotes meticulously identifying problems, weaknesses, risks, and deficits, and labeling students according to this assessment, with little effort given to identifying and building on student

A Student Assistance Team is composed of school staff, and in some instances, members of the larger community. The school staff can include: administrators, classroom teachers, counselors, social workers, support staff, custodians, bus drivers, school resource officers, and school nurses. Community members may include: clergy, medical professionals, mental health professionals, law enforcement, business representatives, retirees, and other community members.

The purpose of the Student Assistance

strengths.

The goal of risk research has been to identify student vulnerability so that interventions could be implemented that would mitigate the risks, thus promoting positive student outcomes in the face of these risks. In reality, however, deficit labels on students have become self-fulfilling prophecies for students rather than a path to resiliency. A typical, though often unspoken, attitude toward a student identified with many risks or deficits is,

Team is to process referrals to designated helpers, in-school services such as support groups, school sponsored events, after school activities, individual counseling, and skill building. The Team also can refer to outside agencies and programs. This implies a relationship with these community resources. Referrals to the Student Assistance Team may be a self-referral, a referral from school staff, other students, or parents. The Team meets on a regular basis to determine what actions need to be taken for given referrals.

An effective Student Assistance Program is an integral part of the school and should be embedded in school change efforts. Successful Student Assistance Programs require the commitment of school boards, district administration, principals, building personnel, parents, students and community members.

Student Assistance Programs Increase:

- Student grades
- Students' positive attitude towards school
- Students' sense of self-worth
- Students' ability to communicate and express feelings appropriately
- Student's positive relationships
- Staff involvement in student issues and concerns
- Parent and community support for students and schools

Student Assistance Programs Decrease:

- Dropout rates
- Alcohol and drug use
- Discipline referrals

"This kid is doomed."

*Resiliency in Schools:
Making it Happen for Students and Educators*

Nan Henderson and Mike Millstein

- Drinking and Driving
- Other behavior problems

Helpful Link

- Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a broad range of **systemic and individualized** strategies for achieving important **social and learning outcomes** while preventing problem behavior with **all** students, please access information with for following link -- <http://www.cde.state.co.us/pbs/>

Colorado Department of Education, Prevention Initiatives

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