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SKOLKURATORNS SAMTALSPRAKTIK

**– en studie om individuella
samtal med barn i den svenska
grundskolan**

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som med vederbörligt tillstånd av Rektor vid Umeå universitet för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen framläggs till offentligt försvar i Hörsal UB.A.220, Samhällsvetarhuset, fredagen den 19 april, kl. 10:00.

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Title

THE COUNSELLING PRACTICE OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS – A study of individual counselling with children in Swedish elementary schools

Abstract

This thesis fills part of the existing knowledge gap regarding school social workers (SSW) individual counselling practice. The overall aim is to investigate the individual SSW counselling in Swedish elementary schools, as part of the pupil health team (PHT). This will be achieved by exploring the following three basic research questions: What characterizes school social work regarding structure, process and interventions in individual counselling sessions held by SSWs with children? How do SSWs describe the difficulties and opportunities in school social work, interventions and performance, and collaboration with other actors in pupil health teams? What characterises SSWs' individual counselling according to the adolescents' experiences and expressed needs?

This thesis consisted of four research studies. The first one concentrated on SSWs personal experiences of counselling children, in which focus group studies were conducted with 22 SSWs (four groups). In the second study, the SSWs described their experiences of being a part of a multi-disciplinary team, the pupil health team (PHT), during the focus group interviews. These two studies were analysed by content analysis. The third study consisted of a quantitative protocol study regarding child characteristics, counselling strategies and interventions analysed by descriptive statistics. The purpose on the fourth study was to increase knowledge about the individual counselling from the adolescents' perspective. Individual interviews were conducted and analysed through content analysis.

This thesis highlighted the necessity for children to express themselves, in regards to their life situation, concerns and problems. SSWs could be one prominent actor in the children's lives by providing individual counselling sessions. SSWs are described as the PHT psychosocial expert with specialised knowledge regarding the impact of negative psychosocial factors on children. In addition, this thesis concluded that available regulations and guidelines meant insure that children are listened and able to express their narrative in a safe and trustful school counselling environment are limited.

Keywords

School social work, School social counselling, mental ill-health, children, adolescents

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