



## Consultation and School Social Work Practice

When did consultation become an identifiable social work practice method with unique attributes, differentiating it from other intervention methods and problem-solving processes? An historical review of the literature identified only two social work consultation publications between 1927 and 1966, according to Kadushin (1977). In addition, his review of the annual program meeting conference brochures for the years from 1874 through 1975 (for what is now known as the National Association of Social Workers [NASW]) identified only two presentations on consultation.

Kadushin's and Buckman's national survey (1978) of NASW members who identified consultation as their primary job responsibility found that most social work consultants were affiliated with "psychiatric-mental health agencies, child welfare-family service agencies, and with school social work" (p. 379). Findings on the types of consultation, problem situations, and intervention methods were very mixed, leading the authors to conclude that social work consultation had yet to "achieve a clear and stable image" (p. 379).

A contemporary online social work literature review, using the database Academic Search Complete for "social work consultation" from 1973 to 2012, identified only 10 consultation publications. "School social work consultation" literature searches for this same time period identify only two articles, by Early (1992) and Sabatino (2009a). The same online review for "educational psychology and consultation" yields 127 publications.

Today, the field of social work publishes no journals devoted to the topic of consultation. In contrast, the American Psychological Association has published the *Consulting Psychology Journal* since 1993 and the *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation* since 1990.