



Viewpoint

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Ensuring student success through safe, disciplined and drug-free schools and communities.



Who is SAP?

During the last 25 to 30 years, the question of what is a student assistance program has been answered and expanded upon. The SAP has evolved far beyond those early years of being an alcohol and other drug intervention effort. The contemporary SAP boasts not only the ability to assist with chemical health issues, but a number of other barriers to learning, including learning challenges, emotional and social distress and undiagnosed medical concerns. It truly encompasses broad-brushed strategies, capable of prevention, identification, intervention, and support services to assist students to achieve academic and social success by promoting healthy development, reducing barriers to learning and building upon strengths. However, when it comes to being clear on who

can be considered a Student Assistance Professional, the question becomes a bit



obscure. In this issue of the *Viewpoint*, we will consider who on campus and in our community "is the SAP."

In the most general of terms, anyone who works to assist students in addressing barriers to learning can be considered part of the process. Since that doesn't really clarify or answer the question 'who is the SAP?', let's narrow it down a bit and make the answer more concrete, something a bit more manageable.

But, first let's look at the constructs of the SAP. Nine components are viewed as the minimum standards to organize and sustain the SAP. They are:

1. School Board Policy
2. Staff Development
3. Program Awareness
4. Internal Referral Process
5. Problem Solving Team and Case Management
6. Evaluation
7. Educational Student Support Groups
8. Cooperation and Collaboration with Community Agencies and Resources
9. Integration with other School-Based Programs.

The nine components provides the direction for the collaborative efforts of students, parents, schools and community to implement programs. Individuals contribute their expertise, time and talents to sustain and enhance the effectiveness of the program.

The following is a more complete sample list of representative members that make up the SAP family.



Campus	District	Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Administrator • Guidance Counselors • School Nurse • School Social Worker • Classroom Teachers • SAP Counselor • Special Education Representative • School Psychologist • At-Risk Counselor • 504 Coordinator • Parent Liaison • Coach • Attendance Clerk • Behavioral Specialist • School Resource Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Board Member • Superintendent • Director of Guidance & Counseling • Safe and Drug-Free Schools Administrator & staff • Director of Student Services • Attendance Officers • Assistant Superintendent • Director of Nursing • Director of Special Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral Health Assessors • Local Treatment Providers • Prevention Specialists • SAP/Educational Trainers & Consultants • Social Workers • Psychologist • Therapists • Clergy • Juvenile Justice

So, who is the SAP? On a day-to-day basis, it is those listed previously. But, in a more global sense, it is all of us. The measured outcome of the SAP will benefit us all and to paraphrase John Kennedy's quote when addressing the citizens of Berlin during the 1961 Soviet blockade, we all are SAP, not just those directly affected.



For information on the National Student Assistance Association, or on how to pursue implementing the SAP in your school, contact our office at info@nsaa.us, or by calling (800) 257-6997.



responsibilities, but also are key stakeholders in the process. In the *community*, those who collaborate with schools to ensure students are connected to resources, have other specialty areas. When all is said and done, there are many who fall within the shadow of the SAP umbrella. Certainly an argument can be

When it comes to education, it is typical for people to wear more than one hat. With the student assistance program, most if not all those responsible for its existence, wear many hats. Every person who sits on a core team has other primary duties, but never-the-less, these individuals are responsible for the ongoing success of the SAP. At the *district level*, those who support SAP efforts clearly have other



made that every single member of a faculty, every district personnel and every member of a community can be considered SAP; it truly is a magnificent collaboration of background, expertise and interest.

National Student Assistance Association
 4200 Wisconsin Ave., NW
 Suite 106-118
 Washington, DC 20016

Phone: 800.257.6310
 Fax: 215.257.6997
 Email: info@nsaa.us

www.nsaa.us