

Editorial

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I am glad to present the new issue of the Relational Social Work Journal with precious contribute from several authors.

As usual, the current issue hosts research and theoretical articles and reflections from field work.

Raineri and Sala present a quantitative research on “Unconventional practice placements”, a type of field education, carried out in the Catholic University of Milan, in which students are given high levels of autonomy in planning and developing original projects. This article, presents the Italian experience. Data suggest that this practice placements are an effective method to develop students’ creativity, professional autonomy, and discretion.

Following we can read results from a research conducted in Israel. Buchbinder reflects on the experience of adolescent girls in distress and their relationship with social workers. The interviews conducted identify two major themes: the girls’ transformation in attitude toward the social workers from hostility to a sense of acceptance and reliability and the perception of the relationships as integrating professionalism with friendship. The study emphasize the importance of developing unique relationships as the basis for intervention to empower girls in distress.

Gomasasca guides readers in reflecting on Ethical Awareness in Social Work Education. The article argues that the role of dialogue in promoting ethical awareness could be strengthened by adopting a “socratic” model of education. After an introduction to the crucial meaning of education and the contemporary background within which teaching ethics takes place, the author presents a brief investigation of the etymological origin of the term “awareness” and its relevance in social work ethics and then reflects on how to promote ethical awareness in social work students focusing on the socratic model of teaching.

In the section “Voices from practice” two experiences are presented.

The first one is related to a community social work project in child protection. Panciroli and Bergami present the Texére project which sees 11 municipalities in the North of Italy engaged in defining new operating ways and methods to involve community in listening to the needs of children, young people and their families. The paper highlights the key elements of community social work in the field of child protection according to the Relational Social Work method and it provides some reflections on the changes necessary at system and service organization level to allow practitioners to act at a community work level.

At the end, an innovative program developed in Mental Health Services is presented by Clementi. The training project “FARE” aimed at promoting a positive culture of mental health and working towards reducing the stigma and fear surrounding mental illness. The paper presents results from an evaluation of the project. The simultaneous presence and interaction of service users, family members, and practitioners as “teachers” allowed participants and practitioners to address emerging needs of the local community and presented those interested in learning more about this field with the chance to connect with others with similar experiences.

Thank you to all the authors for their contribution to our Journal. Their commitment contributes to continue the in-depth analysis of the Relational Approach in Social Work.

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