USING TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

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Although technological innovation continuously alters the landscape of human possibility, it does not guarantee the momentum towards the values of social justice. Social work is both uniquely positioned and ethically obligated to ensure that the drive of technological evolution is a project open to all, and that it does not replicate or amplify existing inequalities.

- Goldkind & Wolf, 2015, p. 85
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• Identify trends in technology and social media use in regional social service agencies.

• Gain insight into how technology and social media is being integrated into social work classrooms.

• Discuss current technological needs of social services agencies and expectations of newly hired social work graduates.
AUDIENCE MEMBERS

• Name?

• Agency & Role?

• Interests in this topic?
CHANGES IN THE FIELD

• What changes have you seen in the use of technology over the years?

“If it’s not written, It did not happen!!”
GRAND CHALLENGE

• Led by the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, the Grand Challenges for Social Work is a groundbreaking initiative to champion social progress powered by science. It’s a call to action for all of us to work together to tackle our nation’s toughest social problems.

• Harness technology for social good

  • Practice Innovation through Technology in the Digital Age
OUR SURVEY

• Interested in technology and social media use in regional agencies
• Hope to use results to guide education of our students
• BSW/MSW field supervisors/liaisons invited to participate by email; encouraged to invite others to participate

• Survey is still available if you haven’t taken it yet!
DEMOGRAPHICS OF PARTICIPANTS

• Overwhelmingly female (~82%)
• Over half were 46 years and older (34% in the 46-55 age group; 21% in the 55+ age group)
• Majority had a Master’s degree (61%)
• Range of disciplines (52% social work; psychology, counseling, criminal justice, marriage and family therapy, among others)
• Predominantly administrators (64%), but some direct practice as well
• Majority were from direct service (78%), nonprofit (71%) agencies
• 50% from agencies with 50 employees or fewer; 44% had 100+
USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Participants reported using various forms of technology:

- Internet resources (e.g. Google)
- Electronic database
- Client management systems
- Interoffice messaging
- Email
- Text messaging
- Video
- Chat based forums
- Social Media

Used for internal and external communication, communication with clients.
GUIDELINES & POLICIES

• 94% reported that their agencies had guidelines/policies on the use of technology

• 82% reported that their agencies had guidelines/policies on the use of social media
89% reported that their agencies trained new employees on the use of technology and/or agency policies related to technology

- 42% read policy manual
- 39% face-to-face
- 18% webinars
TRAINING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

• 74% reported that their agencies trained new employees on the use of social media and/or agency policies related to social media
  • 45% read policy manual
  • 39% face-to-face
  • 18% webinars
IS TRAINING ADEQUATE?

• Approximately 37% reported that the provided training on technology was not adequate

• Approximately 42% reported that the provided training on social media was not adequate
COMPETENCE

• Do you feel as if you had the knowledge & skills regarding technology you needed to succeed when you started in your position?
  • 59% said yes

• Do you feel interns/new employees are prepared to use technology in the work setting?
  • 67% said yes
EXPECTATIONS OF NEW EMPLOYEES
EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYERS...

• What does that mean for us as educators?

• How are we preparing students?
TEACHING ABOUT TECHNOLOGY

- Confronting fears
- Using technology in practice
- Using social media
- Ethics (e.g., boundaries, confidentiality)
- Professionalism
- Networking
- Professional development/lifelong learning
INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

- **VoiceThread**
- **Zoom** /conferencing
- E-text & supplemental material
- **Twitter**
- **Infographic**

- **Website**/**Social media**
  exploration & review
- Video role plays
- Online polls/**surveys**
- **Podcasts**
LET’S HEAR FROM YOU…

• What *types of technology/social media* are you using in your work?

• What *problems* have you encountered or heard about from others?

• What are the *expectations and/or needs* of new graduates or newly hired employees/co-workers?
Whether we are in the classroom or in the field, ethical use of technology and social media should be discussed and practiced.
RESOURCES

• NASW Code of Ethics (revised 2017) Revised Code of Ethics

• Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice (revised 2017) Technology Standards

• The New Social Worker - Stephen P. Cummings, MSW, ACSW, LSW, Social Work Tech Notes columnist

• The Social Work Podcast

*See handout on the conference website for many more resources!
Q & A

• Questions?
• Thoughts?
• Feedback?
TAKE OUR SURVEY!

• Please provide your email address and we will send you the information and link to the survey!
REFERENCES


