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Spring 1-2003

### SW 450.01: Children and Youth at Risk

Charles A. Wellenstein

*University of Montana - Missoula*, [charlie.wellenstein@umontana.edu](mailto:charlie.wellenstein@umontana.edu)

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Children and Youth at Risk  
Social Work 450  
Spring 2003  
3 credits  
T, Th 12:10-1:30  
LA 249

Charlie Wellenstein  
JRH # 12  
243-6153  
[chwell@selway.umt.edu](mailto:chwell@selway.umt.edu)  
Office Hours: T 10-12  
or by appointment

### **Course Description**

This course focuses on the aspects of society that pose a threat to today's youth and the ramifications of those threats on youth development and behavior. The course also covers aspects of resilience and protective factors for youth at risk, and strategies to work with those youth. Special attention is given to the related systems and services in Missoula and Montana including juvenile justice, mental health, child protection, substance abuse, and education.

### **Learning Objectives**

1. Understand the definition, history, and etiology of at risk youth.
2. Identify resilience and protective factors for at risk youth.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the strengths perspective when working with at-risk youth.
4. Examine the effects of past and current public policies on youth.
5. Understand the social context of at risk youth including the influences of family, culture, peers as well as the educational, legal and mental health systems.
6. Identify and incorporate community resources in Missoula that are available for at-risk youth.
7. Understand a systematic approach to working with at-risk youth.

### **Required Readings**

Butterfield, F. (1995). *All of God's children*. New York: Avon.  
Childress, H. (2000). *Landscapes of betrayal, landscapes of Joy*. Albany, NY: State University Press.  
Humes, E. (1996). *No matter how loud I shout*. New York: Simon & Schuster.  
Toth, J. (1998). *Orphans of the living*. New York: Touchstone.

Course handouts.

The readings will be discussed during Thursday's class. Students are expected to have completed the assigned reading and be prepared for discussion.

### **Grading**

Paper 1	80
Paper 2	80
Paper 3	80
Paper 4	80
Paper 5	80
Portfolio Presentation	50
Class Participation	50
Total	500

451-500 points	A	90-100%
401-450 points	B	80-89%
351-400points	C	70-79%
301-350 points	D	60-69%
0-300 points	F	

### **Assignments**

**The Youth at Risk Portfolio:** Course assignments for the semester will be based around building a portfolio on an aspect of at risk youth that captures your interests (e.g. juvenile justice, mental health treatment, medicating youth, runaways, youth sexuality, group homes, education, cultural biases, etc). The assignment will be discussed in detail in class, but here are the required papers and projects that your portfolio should include:

1. A 3-4-page history of policy, theory and practice related to your chosen topic. Due February 13.
2. A 3-4-page paper addressing a specific policy related to your topic. What is your critique of the policy? Is it effective? What is the policy in response to? What needs to be changed? Due March 6.
3. A 3-4-page paper that addresses how race, gender, ethnicity, and class play a role in history and policy of your topic. Due March 20.
4. A 3-4 page paper on a treatment method of at-risk youth. What is the evidence that it is effective? What theories guide the treatment? Due April 10.
5. A 3-4page paper on your vision of what needs to be addressed and carried out with at-risk youth? Due May 1.

Your portfolio will be presented during the last two weeks of class. This will include a 2-page statement of learning and any corrections to the portfolio. Due May 13.

Each assignment will be graded separately when they are due. The grade you will receive will be your grade for completing this section of work. You will have the

opportunity to address my questions and concerns on these sections before handing in the final project. Completing this portion of the assignment will be added into the grading of your portfolio presentation.

All assignments should be typed, double-spaced and use APA style format. Late assignments will be accepted, but there will be a reduction in grading equivalent to one-half grade per day late.

### **Classroom Participation**

Course sessions include general discussion, case analysis, and practical exercise. Effective work in this course depends on your readiness to share experiences, receive feedback and provide support to others. Active and continuing participation in discussions and exercises is critical. It is essential that you attend and prepare for all class meetings and participate in all course exercises.

### **Disability Accommodations**

Accommodations should be made with disability services. Students are also welcome to discuss accommodations with me.

### **Weekly Course Topics**

- 1/28 Course Introduction  
Reading: *All of God's Children*, Part I
- 2/4 History of Youth at Risk  
Risk and resilience  
Youth Development Model  
Reading: *All of God's Children*, Parts II & III
- 2/11 Strengths Perspective  
Parenting and Supervision  
Video: The Children of Rockdale County  
Reading: *All of God's Children*, Part IV
- 2/18 Parenting  
Reading: *No Matter How Loud I Shout*, Parts I & II
- 2/25 Education  
Reading: *No Matter How Loud I Shout*, Parts II & III
- 3/4 Education  
Marianne Moon, Missoula County Public Schools  
Reading: *No Matter How Loud I Shout*, Part IV

- 3/11 Delinquency and Youth Violence  
Video: Inside the Juvenile Justice System  
Reading: *Orphans of the Living*, Parts I & II
- 3/18 Delinquency and Youth Violence  
Brett Gordon and Tom Pinnsenault, Montana Department of Corrections  
Reading: *Orphans of the Living*, Parts II & III
- 4/1 The Lost Kid  
Video: Killer at Thurston High  
Reading: *Orphans of the Living*, Part IV
- 4/8 Services to At-Risk Children  
Mark Washburn, Western Montana Mental Health Center  
Reading: *Landscapes of Betrayal*, Parts I & II
- 4/15 Services to At-Risk Children  
Craig Krueger and Emily McCrea, Attention Home Shelter Care  
Reading: *Landscapes of Betrayal*, Part III
- 4/22 What Really Works with Youth?  
Geoffrey Birnbaum, Missoula Youth Homes  
Reading: *Landscapes of Betrayal*, Part IV
- 4/29 Class Presentations
- 5/6 Class Presentations
- 5/13 Final 8-10am

### **Selected References**

- Balk, D. (1995). *Adolescent development*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Bernstein, N. (2001). *The lost children of Wilder*. New York: Pantheon.
- Butterfield, F. (1995). *All of God's children: the Bosket family and the American history of violence*. New York: Avon Books.
- Bruer, J. (1999). *The myth of the first three years*. New York: Free Press.
- Coles, R. (1996). *The moral life of children*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.
- Dryfoos, J.G. (1998). *Safe passage: making it through adolescence in a risky society*. New York: Oxford.
- Elkind, D. (1998). *All grown up and no place to go*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Erikson, E. (1968). *Identity: youth and crisis*. New York: Norton.
- Fraser, M. ed. (1997). *Risk and resilience in children*. Washington, D.C.: NASW.
- Garbarino, J. (1999). *Lost boys*. New York: Free Press.
- Gordon, L. (1999). *The great Arizona orphan abduction*. Cambridge, MA:

- Harvard University Press.
- Hine, T. (1999). *The rise and fall of the American teenager*. New York: Avon.
- Hubner, J. & Wolfson, J. (1996). *Somebody else's children*. New York: Three Rivers.
- Lanteri, L. & Patti, J. (1996). *Waging peace in our schools*. Boston: Beacon.
- Lindsey, D. (1994). *The welfare of children*. New York: Oxford.
- Mass, H. & Engler, R. (1959). *Children in need of parents*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Males, M. (1999). *Framing youth: ten myths about the next generation*. Monroe, ME: Common Courage.
- Mcwhirter, J., Mcwhirter, B., Mcwhirter, A., & Mcwhirter, E. (1998). *At-risk youth: a comprehensive response*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks & Cole.
- Mennel, R. (1973). *Thorns and thistles*. Hanover, N.H.: The University Press of New England.
- Rauner, D.M. (2000). *They still pick me up when I fall*. New York: Columbia Press.
- Saleebey, D. ed. (1997). *The strengths perspective in social work practice*. New York: Longman.
- Singer, M., Singer, L., & Anglin, T., eds. (1993). *Handbook for screening adolescents at psychosocial risk*. New York: Lexington.
- Sommers-Flannigan, J., & Sommers-Flannigan, R. (1997). *Tough kids, cool counseling*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Toth, J. (1997). *Orphans of the living*. New York: Touchstone.
- Trieschman, A., Whittaker, J., & Brendto, L. (1969). *The other 23 hours*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing.
- Weissboud, R. (1996). *The vulnerable child*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.