

# The role of social workers in road traffic accident prevention communication for secondary school students in Danang City

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## Abstract:

Based on the analysis of the current status of road traffic accidents in Danang city and secondary schools in the area, the author analyzes the role of social workers in road traffic accident prevention communication for secondary school students. Most secondary school students are aware of the role of social workers in communication to prevent road traffic accidents and have made suggestions to improve the effectiveness of social work communication in preventing road traffic accidents for secondary school students in the study area.

## 1. Introduction:

The rate of students violating traffic safety among secondary school students in Danang city is quite common and tends to increase, meanwhile schools do not have professional social work activities, students do not have systematic access to social work services; social work communication staff are mainly teachers. Evaluating the current status of road traffic accidents and the role of social workers to improve the quality of social work communication in preventing road traffic accidents for students, contributing to improving the quality of social work communication in preventing road traffic accidents in Danang city in general and secondary schools in the area in particular. On that basis, it is very necessary and meaningful to provide specific orientation and solutions.

## 2. Content;

### 2.1. Current status of road traffic accidents in Danang city

Road traffic accidents not only cause damage to people and property but also are an obsession every time going out. Traffic accidents are not only physically painful, but also affect people and relatives both mentally and spiritually, causing material loss to society. For Danang, as a tourist and service city, in recent years, the number of road traffic accidents has increased in number, number of dead people, and number of injured people, specifically:

**Table 1. Situation of handling violations of Road Traffic Law in the city**

Content	Unit	Year			Average
		2021	2022	2023	
Make a record	Case	46,414	63,169	98,194	69,259
Number of violations committed by students	Case	789	1,056	1,495	1,113.3
Collection and payment to the State budget	Billion VND	38.8	73.86	117.6	76.8
Traffic accident	Case	81	82	143	102
Number of deaths	Person	44	56	43	47.7
Number of injured people	Person	56	56	140	84.0
Estimated damage	Billion VND	145	182	511	279.3

(Source: *Danang City Traffic Safety Committee 2024*)

In 2021: In Danang city, there were 46,414 cases of traffic safety violations recorded and 81 traffic accidents occurred, killing 44 people, injuring 56 people, and estimated property damage of more than 2.4 billion VND. Compared to 2020, there was an increase of 05 cases (81/76, + 6.5%), a decrease of 09 dead people (44/53, - 17%), a decrease of 02 injured people (56/58, -3.4%). In particular, there was a particularly serious traffic accident in Lien Chieu district (December 31, 2020), injuring 1 person and causing property damage of 1,691 million VND.

In 2022: There were 63,169 cases of traffic safety violations recorded. Compared to 2021, there was an increase of 2 cases of traffic accidents (82/80), an increase of 12 dead people (56/44) and an increase of 1 injured person (56/55).

In 2023: There were 98,194 cases of traffic safety violations recorded. There were 143 cases of traffic accidents, killing 43 people and injuring 140 people. Compared to the same period in 2022, the number of cases increased by 61 (143/82= 74.4%), the number of dead people decreased by 13 people (43/56) by 23.2%, the number of injured people increased by 84 people (140/56= 150%). Notably, there were 1,495 traffic accidents involving students (accounting for 1.52%) and it was on the rise.

**Table 2. Investigation and resolution of road traffic accidents**

Content	Unit	Year		
		2021	2022	2023
Prosecution	Case	15	50	43
Defendant	Defendant	12	47	40
No prosecution	Case	2	25	21
Transfer to the military to handle	Case	1	3	0
Under investigation	Case	0	9	41

(Source: *Danang City Traffic Safety Committee 2024*)

In 2021, there were 81 cases of traffic accidents in Danang city, killing 44 people, injuring 56 people, and property damage estimated at more than 2.4 billion VND. Compared to 2020, there were an increase of 05 cases (81/76, + 6.5%), a decrease of 09 dead people (44/53, -17%), a decrease of 02 injured people (56/58, - 3.4%)

**Table 3. Communication activities on road traffic safety**

No	Form	Unit	No. of times	Quantity
1	Hang propaganda banners: Alcohol concentration, speed	Piece	09	2,500
2	Prepare and distribute documents: "Q&A on the law on sanctioning administrative violations in the field of road and rail traffic".	Copy	01	500
3	Make propaganda video clips "Traffic culture - Give way to pedestrians", "Regarding speed regulations when driving vehicles"; "drink alcohol or beer - don't drive."	Video	ten	ten
4	Give helmets to students	Helmet	1	700
5	Provide "Traffic safety handbook in school area".	Copy	3	1000
6	Road traffic safety propaganda session	Session	49	6970
7	Conference to propagate and sign on compliance with Road Traffic Law	Conference	1	257

(Source: *Danang City Traffic Safety Committee 2024*)

The data table above shows that in the past year, the city's traffic safety committee organized 9 peak propaganda campaigns on traffic safety, hung more than 2,500 propaganda banners according to thematic topics, especially on alcohol concentration and speed regulations. Coordinate with the Department of Justice

to prepare and distribute 500 copies of the document "Q&A on the Law on sanctioning administrative violations in the field of road and rail traffic"; Make propaganda video clips "Traffic culture - Give way to pedestrians", "Regarding speed regulations when driving vehicles"; "Drink alcohol - don't drive"... to propagate on mass media sites and in the community; coordinate with member agencies and Traffic Safety Committees of districts to distribute many other products and documents to serve propaganda work.

Organize the program "Giving helmets to students" and propagate traffic safety, giving 700 helmets to elementary school students in difficult circumstances in the city. Provide the document "Traffic safety handbook in school area" to agencies, units, and districts to research solutions related to traffic safety of road traffic infrastructure passing by school area in the management area. Coordinate with the Traffic Police Department - City Public Security to organize 49 propaganda sessions, with more than 6,970 listening times.

In addition, there are many propaganda activities in many forms of propaganda organized by member agencies of the City Traffic Safety Committee: Vietnam Fatherland Front, Youth Union, Veterans Association, Farmers Association, Red Cross Society, Labor Federation; Department of Justice, Department of Information and Communications, Radio Station, Danang Newspapers.

**2. 2. The role of social workers in communication to prevent road traffic accidents**

The project to develop the social work profession in Vietnam has been promulgated. Social work has been oriented to be a science and a professional profession with the issuance of training codes and rank codes. However, in the current period, there are limitations in clearly defining working positions and standardizing some staff titles. Developing school social work is one of the effective solutions in promoting personal capacity and preparing for comprehensive development of students. However, currently not many people, especially students know about school social work.

In order to find out students' awareness of the role of school social workers, with the question: "Have you ever heard/known about school social work?", the results are as follows:

**Table 4. Have heard/known about school social work**

No	Grade	School social worker				Total	
		Have heard/known		Never		N	%
		N	%	N	%		
1	Grade 6	32	64.0	18	36.0	50	100
3	Grade 7	34	68.0	16	32.0	50	100
4	Grade 8	41	82.0	9	18.0	50	100
5	Grade 9	48	96.0	2	4.0	50	100

(Source: Processing survey data, December 2023)

The survey shows that currently, secondary schools in Danang city do not have a school social work department, nor do they have professional social work activities. Therefore, their understanding of school social work is still limited. Mostly, they only have heard and known about it, but not yet experienced the support services of this activity. The rate of having known/heard about school social work in grades 6, 7, 8, 9 increased gradually from low to high, respectively 64.0%, 68.0%, 82.0%, 96.0%. To explore this issue, the author conducted in-depth interviews with representatives of school leaders, specifically:

*“As a leader and manager, I know that social work plays an increasingly important role in participating in solving difficult problems of students in schools. The Ministry of Education and Training has in the recent time taken many measures to prevent and solve student problems. In particular, the Plan for social work development in the Education sector for the 2017-2020 period and the 2021-2025 period has been issued and implemented and Circular No. 33/2018/TT-BGDĐT on Guidelines for social work in school has been issued. However, currently, the school still does not have a social work department. Student support activities are all conducted by teachers. Because of this problem, students' understanding of social work is still very limited” (In-depth interview, leader of a secondary school in Danang).*

One of the important contents of school social work in communication activities to prevent road traffic accidents in schools is the detection of risks inside and outside of school that affect traffic safety behavior, organizing activities to prevent and limit the risk of road traffic accidents and violations of traffic safety laws at schools. However, currently the number of secondary schools with social work departments is relatively small, most are in the process of testing the model. Officers participating in social work are mainly concurrent ones and do not have enough knowledge and skills. With the question: *“How to evaluate the expertise of the staff participating in social work in road traffic accident prevention and control activities at your school?”*. The results obtained are as follows:

**Table 5. Evaluate the professional qualifications of staff participating in school social work**

No	Officer	Have quality	Competency and professional qualifications of staff participating in school social work			
			No professional qualifications	Low awareness, not meet the needs	Enough awareness to mee the needs	High awareness, meet the needs
1	School leaders	100%	2.0	44.5	35.5	18.0
2	Youth Union officers	100%	6.0	45.7	19.0	8.0
3	Homeroom teachers	100%	8.5	61.5	17.5	12.5
4	Subject teachers	100%	8.8	71.5	25.9	12.4
5	Trade Union officers	100%	9.5	56.0	18.5	16.0
6	Medical staff	100%	12.0	54.5	22.5	11.0

(Source: *Processing survey data, December 2023*)

As mentioned above, secondary schools in Danang currently do not have specialized work positions for social work and school psychology counseling. Officers and teachers assigned to be in charge of social work are mainly concurrent ones, although they participate in direct training and are provided with relevant documents, there are still many difficulties in acquiring specialized knowledge and skills. Survey data shows that 100% of students think that teachers have good qualities and are enthusiastic in helping students. However, their social work capacity, qualifications and expertise are still weak and does not meet practical needs, specifically:

- High level of social work qualifications and expertise, meeting practical needs, respectively as follows: 18.0% for school leaders; 16.0% for trade union officers; 12.5% for homeroom teachers; 12.4% for subject teachers; 11.0% for medical staff; 8.0% for youth union officers.

- Social work qualifications and expertise are sufficient to meet the needs: 35.3% for school leaders; 25.9% for subject teachers; 22.5% for medical staff; 19.0% for youth union officers; 18.5% for trade union officers; 17.5% for homeroom teachers.
- No social work qualifications and expertise, the proportions are as follows: 12.0% for medical staff; 9.5% for trade union officers; 8.8% for subject teachers; 8.5% for homeroom teachers; 6.0% for youth union officers, 2.0% for school leaders.

The above data shows that the majority of staff participating in school social work has low qualifications and cannot meet the needs. Although some staff has been trained in social work, they are still not qualified to promptly and thoroughly assist students with their difficulties. Furthermore, all staff participates with concurrent roles, so they cannot focus their time on helping their students.

*“Social work plays an increasingly important role in participating in solving difficult problems of students in schools. However, as a service being piloted, it is still young and faces many difficulties and challenges. On the other hand, awareness of social work services in schools is still limited. Sectors, levels, parents and students do not know much about these services. Our teachers are not properly trained and concurrent staff. That is why we do not have enough expertise and skills to help our students.” (In-depth interview with homeroom teacher, secondary school in Danang)*

Evaluating the role of social work in communication to prevent road traffic accidents with students at school age through the survey question: *“The role of social work communication in preventing road traffic accidents?”*, most of the students understand and highly appreciate the role of social work communication for families, schools and society, specifically:

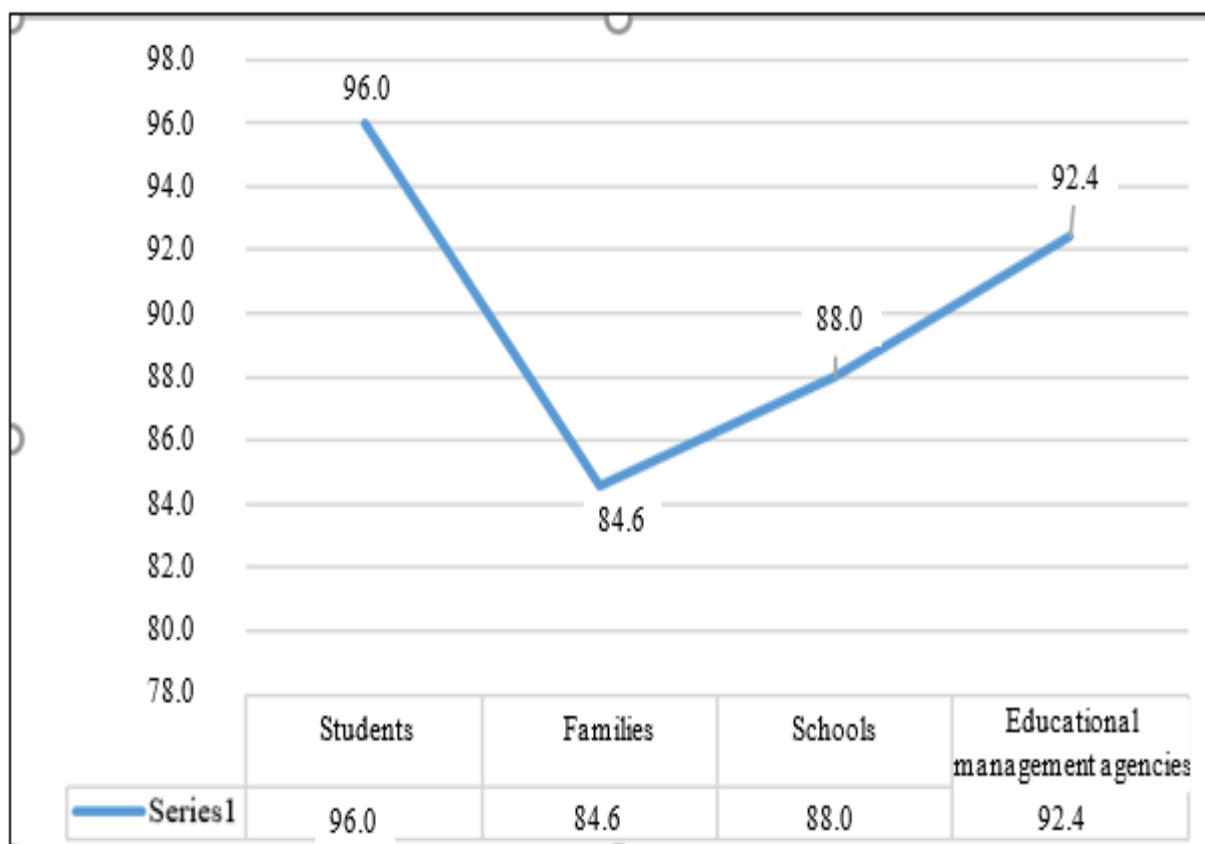


Chart 1. The role of social work communication in preventing road traffic accidents  
(Source: Processing survey data, December 2023)

For students: 96.0% of students think that social work plays an extremely important role for students in communication to prevent traffic accidents at school. Social work will coordinate with relevant departments,

authorities, help children raise awareness about traffic safety; access mental health services, help students become self-aware of their traffic behavior and acquire personal and social standards.

For families: 84.6% of students think that social work plays an extremely important role for parents, in communication to prevent traffic accidents at school. Social work at schools mobilizes parents to participate effectively in their children's education; understand children's developmental stages as well as their needs in educating and orienting standard traffic safety behaviors.

For teachers: 88.0% of students think that social work plays an extremely important role for teachers/schools in communication to prevent traffic accidents at school. School social work helps teachers teach effectively in integrating traffic safety knowledge and skills. Better practice of principles in education: combining school - family - society.

For educational management agencies and staff: 92.4% of students think that social work plays an extremely important role for educational management agencies in communication to prevent traffic accidents at school. School social work helps managers in planning and building traffic safety policies and training programs on traffic safety, especially the social work process for schools.

To investigate students' understanding of the professional social work role, with the question: *"The necessity level for professional social workers in propaganda activities to prevent road traffic accidents for students at school?"*. The results are as follows:

**Table 6. Necessity level of professional social work in schools**

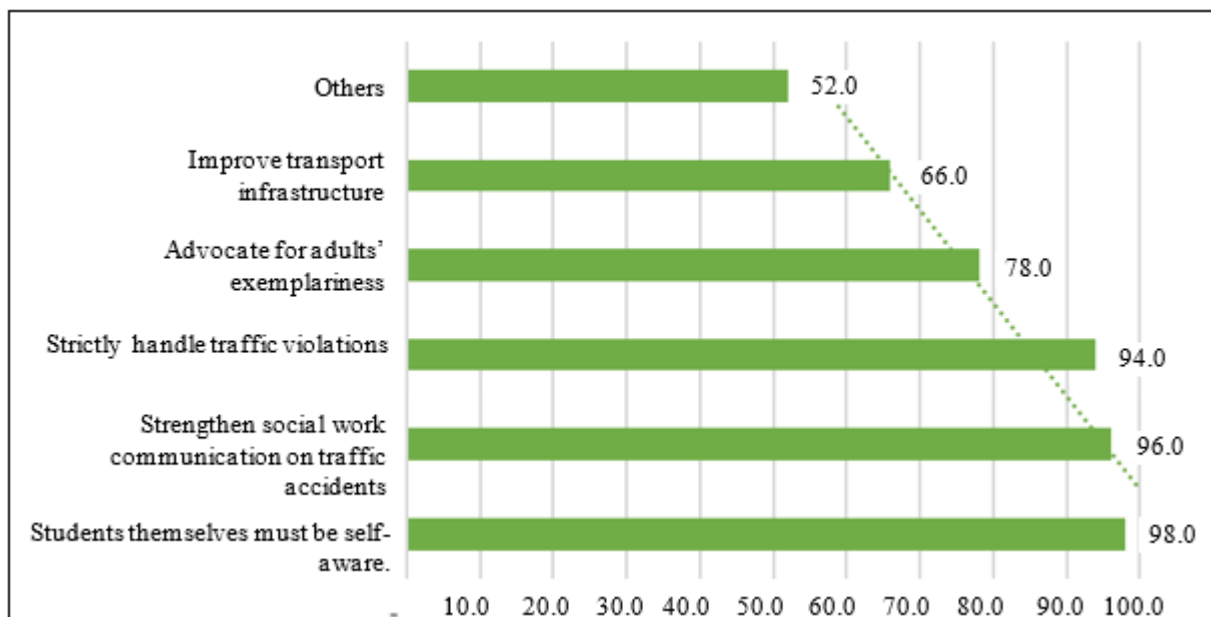
No	Necessity level	Grade							
		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Very necessary	33	66.0	37	74.0	42	84.0	45	90.0
2	Necessary	11	22.9	8	16.0	5	10.0	3	6.0
3	Unnecessary	5	10.0	4	8.0	3	6.0	2	4.0
4	Very unnecessary	1	2.0	1	2.0	-	-	0	0
5	Total	50	100.0	50	100.0	50	100.0	50	100.0

(Source: Processing survey data, December 2023)

The table above shows that the majority of students are aware of the role of social work in school. The rate of assessment as "Very necessary" is higher at higher grades, specifically 66.0% for grade 6, 34.0% for grade 7, 84.0% for grade 8 and 90.0% for grade 9. With the level "Very unnecessary" this rate is relatively low, the rate is 20% for grades 6 and 7; 0% for grades 8 and 9.

*"School social work helps children deal with stress and nervous crises; access mental health services; helps students exploit and promote their strengths and succeed in learning, gain personal and social competence. Specifically, it helps children reduce behaviors such as: not completing their studies; being aggressive, fighting with friends, not being able to control themselves, being physically abused, not going to school regularly, being depressed, showing signs of suicidal behavior, mental stress" (In-depth interview with youth union officer of a secondary school in Danang).*

To find out students' suggestions to improve the effectiveness of communication, with the question: "In your opinion, to do good social work communication activities in preventing road traffic accidents for students, which of the following things does the school need to do?", the results are as follows:



**Chart 2. Proposal to improve the effectiveness of social work communication in preventing road traffic accident (Unit: %)**

(Source: Processing survey data, December 2023)

To do good social work communication activities in preventing road traffic accidents for secondary school students in Danang city, the surveyed students had many different suggestions, specifically:

- + Students themselves must be self-aware: This is the suggestion chosen by 98.0% of students. They believe that they are self-aware in learning traffic safety laws, thereby becoming self-aware of their own traffic behaviors. This is the most important thing to minimize traffic accidents.
- + Strengthen social work communication: This is a suggestion chosen by 96.0% of surveyed students. They are aware of the importance of school social work and social work in propagating traffic safety. School social work has the role of connecting resources, connecting families, communities, school systems and authorities.
- + Strictly handle traffic violations: 96.0% of students choose this. They think that the handling should be strict such as: Notifying the school and parents for appropriate ways of handling. This form is also a lesson to warn other students, so that they can limit their "selves" and like to express themselves.
- + Advocate for adults' exemplariness: 78.0% of students choose this. In addition to good behavior in traffic, being exemplary also includes not covering up wrongdoing, not indulging in buying motorbikes, and contacting schools and authorities to ask for reducing the fine when they violate.
- + Improve traffic infrastructure: 66.0% of students choose this. They think that the traffic system is not synchronized, the roads are still narrow, there are many intersections... and dangerous. It is necessary to renovate and build underpasses, overpasses...
- + Other suggestions: 52.0% of students choose this, these suggestions include: further enhancing traffic safety knowledge during school hours, extracurricular, and learning competitions in schools in different forms to improve students' understanding of road traffic safety.



### **3. Conclusion:**

Based on the actual situation, road traffic safety violations at secondary schools in the city are still taking place, posing many potential risks of accidents and traffic safety propaganda activities still lacks the role of professional social workers. Therefore, most students are aware of the role of social workers in communication to prevent road traffic accidents and make suggestions to improve the effectiveness of social work communication in preventing road traffic accidents.

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