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## **Message from NYSUT Social Services: School Social Worker and Psychologist Network**

As many of you already know, my name is Ani Shahinian and I work in NYSUT's Social Services department. As we proceed through this unusual time of uncertainty and stress due to the coronavirus pandemic, NYSUT is concerned about the school social workers, psychologists and counselors who are being asked to provide support to the school community. In an effort to establish a support network for them, we are asking local leaders to identify those individuals in your district who are in that role.

To assess how NYSUT Social Services may be a source of support and information, we would like to engage union mental health professionals in conversations about what they are experiencing. Many mental health professionals in schools are isolated from one another and could utilize a support and information network to be able to do their work. Connecting online or by phone with one another may be a valuable way to help this particular group of professionals manage this difficult time.

With information about federal and state benefit programs quickly evolving, we hope it will be helpful for mental health professionals to have a forum where they can receive updated information and share experiences.

If you would like to offer this networking opportunity to your members who are social workers, psychologists and counselors, please [click here](#) to send us their names and contact info. We will reach out to them directly.

We will all face mental health challenges and NYSUT believes that the demand for care in this area will increase. Participation in this sort of network will be completely voluntary, and we are happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Please contact me at 518-732-6239 or email [ani.shahinian@nysut.org](mailto:ani.shahinian@nysut.org).