

Social Work Abstracts

Social Work Abstracts database is an electronic index to articles and documents dealing with all aspects of social work, human services and related fields. The database draws its citations from over 450 journals published from 1977 to the present, covering all areas of the profession, including theory and practice, areas of service, social issues, and social problems. Social Work Abstracts is appropriate for research dealing with scholarly and professional perspectives in the field of social work. It is not a good source for popular treatment of a subject, such as articles from *Time*, *Newsweek*, etc. (Use Expanded Academic ASAP or Academic Search for articles from popular magazines.) *If you have any questions, please ask a librarian for help!*

Accessing Social Work Abstracts

1. From the University Library system web page (www.library.pitt.edu) select **Databases A-Z**.
2. Click the **S** to view the databases that begin with S.
3. Scroll down and click **Social Work Abstracts (via SilverPlatter)** then click **CONNECT to the database**. A list of SilverPlatter databases will appear in a separate window.
4. Scroll down the list to **Social Work Abstracts** and select the database by clicking the box to the left of the database title.
5. Click the **Start Searching** button at the top right of the page. The Social Work Abstracts Advanced Search screen will appear:

The screenshot displays the 'about ERLWebSPIRS' search interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'Search', 'Database Guide', 'Help', and 'Logout'. Below these are tabs for 'Search', 'Advanced', 'Thesaurus', 'Index', and 'Search History'. A search bar contains the text 'How do I...?'. The main search area has three 'Terms' input boxes, each with a dropdown menu set to '(Terms anywhere)'. Between the boxes are 'Combine Using' options: AND (selected), OR, and NOT. A 'Search' button is located below the third term box. To the right of the search area, there are buttons for 'No search limits set', 'Change', and 'Clear'. Below the search area is a 'Change Display' button and a dropdown menu showing 'Social Work Abstracts 1977-2003/09' with a 'Change' button. A disclaimer states: 'Important: By clicking on "Search", you are agreeing to accept the terms of the Ovid Technologies License Agreement, which governs your use of Ovid Technologies databases and proprietary search-and-retrieval software. The text of this license can be viewed in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.' The 'WebSPIRS Search Hints' section includes a 'Which Search?' heading and a list of tips: 'Use Search for a search as simple or complex as you like.', 'Use Advanced to combine search terms and specific fields.', and 'Use the Index to locate specific terms within a database.' A 'Tips' box on the right says: 'Pressing Enter is like clicking the main action button (such as Search, Go to Term, or Print). Full Text Options next to a record means it has links to easy ways to see the full text.' At the bottom, it lists additional features: 'Use Suggest (on the Search page) to get suggested alternatives to your search terms.', 'Use the Thesaurus to search using the database's controlled vocabulary.', and 'Use the Database Table of Contents to look up and display full text records.'

Searching in Social Work Abstracts

Type search terms into the **Terms** boxes and combine them using the **Combine Using** buttons. The **AND** button will limit results to records containing **ALL** of your search terms, while the **OR** button will expand your search to records containing **ANY** of your search terms. The **NOT** button will limit results to records

containing one search term but not another. If you type more than one word into a Terms box, the words will be searched as a phrase, e.g. “drug policy” or “family practice.”

You can also set search limits by clicking the **Change** button in the upper-right-hand part of the screen. You can limit by publication year in this way.

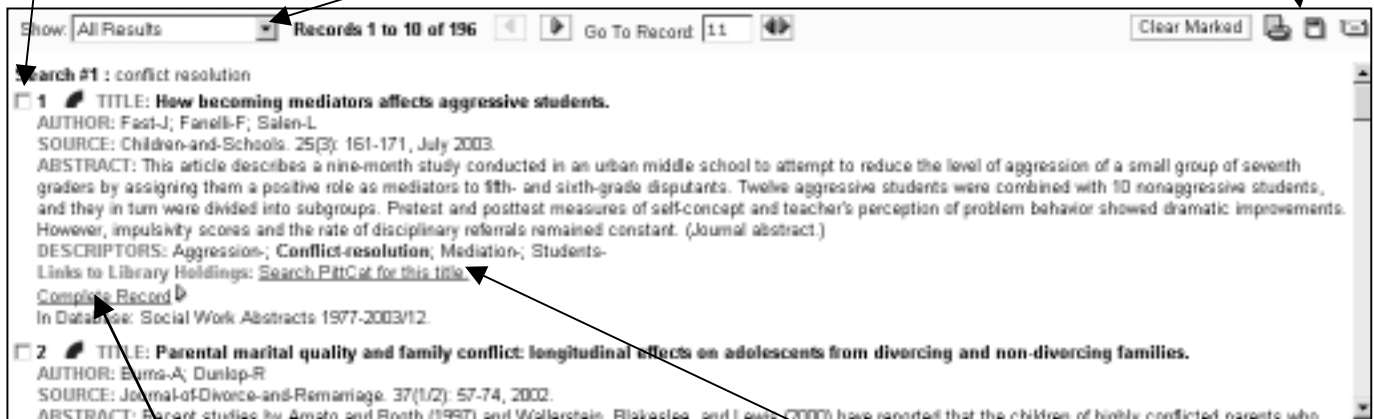
After typing your search terms and choosing the search limits you want, click the **Search** button to send your search to the database. If your search retrieved any results, a page will display with a list of bibliographic citations called records. The number of records your search retrieved is indicated at the top of the list. Each record is divided into several informational fields: Personal Author, Title, Publication Year, Source (Journal Citation), Abstract, etc. See the **Searching Tips** section below for more information about Searching in Social Work Abstracts.

Viewing Your Search Results

Your search results will display with a list of records as shown below. You can find out if the University Library System has the item you are viewing, mark the items you may want to print or e-mail, and find more complete information about the citation.

Click in the square here to select or **mark** those records you wish to print out, save to a disk, or send to an email account. When you click on the box to the left of the record number a check mark will appear. If you change your mind, click on the marked box and the check mark will disappear. You can review your marked records by selecting **Marked Results** from this drop-down menu.

These buttons can be used to print, save or e-mail your marked records (see the section below for more details).





Click here to see the **complete record** with embedded links in the Author and Source fields. Clicking on these links in the Complete Record will automatically perform specific searches. For example, clicking on an author’s name will retrieve all cited works by that author in the database, and clicking on a source title will retrieve all the records from that source

Click here to **find out if the University Library System has this title**. An automatic PITTCat search will be performed, which will indicate the location and holdings, if any, of the cited material.

Search History

Click the **Search History** tab at the top of the search window to display and combine previous searches.

- To **display the results of a previous search**, click  next to the search in the Search History list.
- To **combine two or more previous searches**, click the checkboxes next to the searches in the Search History list and then click the **and** or the **or** button above the list.
 - The **and** button will limit results to those records retrieved by ALL of your combined searches.
 - The **or** button will limit results to those records retrieved by ANY of your combined searches.
 - After the searches are combined, a new search will be added at the top of the search list. To display the records of the combined search, click  next to the new result in the search list.

Print, Save or E-mail Search Results

Social Work Abstracts offers three output options for search results: printing, saving to a disk, or e-mailing the results to an e-mail account. After you have marked the records you wish to keep, select the method you wish to use by clicking on the appropriate button on the right at the top of the result list window. A new window will appear which allows you to choose which records to print, save or e-mail and how they will be displayed. Make your choices, and then click **Print**, **Save**, or **Send Mail**.

How to Find Articles and Documents Retrieved by Your Search

Your Social Work Abstracts search results are likely to contain three types of materials: journal articles, chapters in books and dissertation abstracts. Journal articles will have a **Source (SO)** field. The **SO** field lists the original source of the article, including journal name, volume number, date, and pages. This information is not provided for abstract of dissertations, which will have a **Dissertation Affiliation (DA)** field that will contain the institute with which the author is affiliated, as well as the degree and the year granted. You can check to see if the University Library System has an item by either clicking on the blue **Search PITTCat for this title** button in a particular citation, or by searching PITTCat for the item.

Searching Tips

Operators

If you are looking for two or more words to appear adjacent to each other, like *social work* or *new york city*, simply leave a space between them. You can also use linking words or **operators** to combine more than one search term or concept to either broaden or narrow your search. Here are a few examples:

<i>Operator</i>	<i>Search Example</i>	<i>Finds Records Containing</i>
AND	cloning and ethics	finds records containing both cloning and ethics
OR	metaphor or simile	finds records containing either metaphor or simile
NOT	chemistry not organic	finds records containing chemistry but not organic. Use carefully because not eliminates records containing both terms.
NEAR	welfare near reform	finds records containing welfare and reform in same sentence
WITH	refugees with bosnia	Finds records containing refugees and Bosnia in the same field

Fields and field searching

Each record in Social Work Abstracts is broken into specific informational *fields*, designated by a two-letter code. Each field contains a specific kind of information, such as the name of an author (in the **AU** or **AUTHOR** field), the journal citation (in the **SO** or **SOURCE** field), etc. You can use field codes to limit your search to a particular field. Type the term(s) you are searching, then type the word *in*, and the specific field you wish to find the term within. For example, **smith in au** finds Smith only in the Author (AU) field. Using *in* allows you to narrow your search by looking for a search term within a specific field. You can combine field searching with operators to make a more complicated search such as **(battered-women or spouse-abuse) in de**, which will find records that contain “battered women” or “spouse abuse” in the descriptor (DE) field. To see a list of fields and field codes for Social Work Abstracts, use the **Database Guide** link to access field help screens.

Narrow your search by using *descriptors* as search terms. Descriptors are subject index terms used by the database to describe the contents of each record. Find a record that is very close to your topic focus, and look at the terms listed in the DE field of the full record.

Find recommended search terms for your subject term by using the *Suggest* feature. The terms suggested will be from the Descriptor field so they will give more precise search results.

To find suggested search terms:

1. Go to the Search screen by clicking the Search tab in the upper left of the screen.
2. Type a term or phrase and click .
3. Suggested terms will be listed and you click on the term to display search results for that term.

Broaden your search by using *truncation*. Type a word root and immediately follow it with a * . This symbol is the Social Work Abstracts truncation symbol. For example, **child*** finds records containing child, child’s, children, childhood, childlike, etc

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