Social Work
Student’s Guide
Elements of Social Work
PREPARING FOR A CAREER IN SOCIAL WORK

While a bachelor’s degree – and sometimes a master’s degree – is required for most entry-level social work positions, there are strategies for preparing for a career in social work that begin right where you are in high school. Social work is a profession that requires the ability to be flexible, to be able to remain non-judgmental and to engage with individuals and families to solve difficult and complex problems, and to be able to balance work and life in a way that sustains a rewarding and fulfilling career.

Some of the core courses required for graduation will be important in building the skills for social work. Social work requires strong verbal and writing communication skills. In addition, in order to help families, one must be able to employ math skills in budgeting but one must also be able to read and interpret data to help guide case plans and the accomplishment of client goals. Following is a list of subjects that will help prepare you for a career in social work:

- **English and Language Arts**
  - The ability to write succinctly and clearly is extremely important since documentation is the basis for assessing progress in the case and communicating both signs of safety and/or risk. Much documentation is used as evidence in court proceedings. In addition, a social worker’s professionalism is reflected in documentation that is clearly written and free of grammatical and punctuation errors.

- **Communication, Speech and Drama**
  - Verbal communication skills are required for effective interviewing and assessment. They are also important in building rapport and effectively engaging families to help them accomplish changes needed to reunify with their children. As important, social workers communicate information about the clients to other professionals and partners.

  - Another aspect of social work that requires verbal communication skills is that of advocacy. Debate or speech courses may prepare a social worker to stand up for a client or to develop mediation and/or conflict resolution skills. Some social workers engage in public advocacy which involves speaking up for policy and procedure changes that benefit clients.

  - There are skills to be gained from being involved in theater such as understanding character traits and life from another person’s perspective. No one gives a social worker a script to guide the work, so being able to role play or practice various responses in specific situations is an important skill in working with families facing complex problems.
• Foreign Language
  o Being fluent in a foreign language can be a useful skill in social work and particularly since social workers are charged with knowing the communities in which they work and in providing culturally-responsive services. In many places in Kansas, for instance, a significant portion of the population speaks Spanish. Depending on the region or area in which one wants to work, some students might wish to study another foreign language or even to learn American Sign Language.

• Social Sciences
  o Sociology is the study of how society functions. By studying sociology, high school students will become familiar with many of the terms and elements that support exploring the ways in which individuals and families function in a community as well as some of the social functions of the community itself. Student may explore gender roles, poverty, culture, families, conflict, oppression, and power and privilege.

  o Psychology allows social workers to understand how biology and psychology connect as well as develop an understanding of psychological disorders, the biological basis of behavior and personality and assessment.

  o American History may seems like an unusual preparatory course for social work, but understanding the place of the social service system in the United States is important in understanding the political and social framework upon which the child welfare system sits. What was President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal? When were Medicare and Medicaid created? What was the role played by Jane Addams’ Hull House?

• Family and Consumer Sciences
  o Because much of the work of child welfare is working with families to improve relationships, food and nutrition, budgeting, and parenting, family and consumer sciences provide good, solid backgrounds for building the skills to assist families with change.

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE IN HELPING OTHERS

If you think you might be interested in a social work career and particularly one in which you’ll work with children and families, it is important to build skills in organizing, serving and advocacy by participating in extracurricular activities such as student government, FCCLA, or other clubs that will allow you to build skills in group and relationship work.

Volunteering offers another avenue to prepare for working with children and families. Although volunteering with groups like CASA (Court-appointed Special Advocates for children in out-of-home placement) require volunteers to be 18 years of age, organizations like youth groups, Scouting, or recreation programs often need and want
youth volunteers. Service clubs can raise funds for specific projects to benefit children or families in need. For example, one service club raised the money to purchase new suitcases for children in foster care who often have to move their belongings in large trash bags. Another group raised the funds to purchase a starter kit of household items for a foster youth transitioning from foster care to a dorm room at a community college.

Working or volunteering with children will help you learn more about child development. Providing child care and studying up on parenting skills in order to make you a better provider is another strategy for building skills. County extension agents often offer child care clinics and have a wealth of on-line and print materials that explore a broad range of topics including health, safety, parenting, child care, child development, finances and family systems.

Once you’ve graduated from high school, you may want to explore a career in social work by working full or part-time as a social work assistant or family support worker. These positions often require only a high school diploma or equivalency and are often flexible enough to allow you to continue your college studies as you work toward your bachelor’s in social work.

**KANSAS SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK**

Pursuing a degree in social work in Kansas is a goal that can be accomplished in all parts of the state. Alphabetically, the following schools have social work programs: Bethel College (Newton); Fort Hays State University (Hays, Garden City); Kansas State University (Manhattan, Salina); Newman University (Wichita, Western Ks-Dodge City); Pittsburg State University; University of Kansas (Lawrence, Overland Park, Kansas City); Washburn University; Wichita State University. As you’ll note from the following map, all of the schools listed have bachelors’ programs. Those marked with a “*” have masters’ programs. For more information, see each school’s website as listed on the page.

**EXPLORING MY INTEREST IN SOCIAL WORK**

Following are some exercises and challenges that will help you evaluate whether social work might be a field for you. We know that you will explore many options as you consider a career, but it is our hope that this curriculum as well as the realistic job preview *Child Welfare in Kansas - Where You Can Make a Difference* will plant the seeds for you to consider joining us in an exciting, rewarding, intense and challenging field, one where you can truly make a difference.

The Kansas Child Welfare Workforce Initiative
www.kwi.ku.edu
SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK IN KANSAS

1 – Bethel College Social Work Program (Newton)  
 http://www.bethelks.edu/academics/areas-of-study/social-work/

2 – Fort Hays State University Department of Sociology and Social Work (Hays)  
 http://www.fhsu.edu/sociology/  
 KU/Fort Hays Garden City Community College - Western Kansas Outreach Program  
 http://www.socwel.ku.edu/academics/msw/WesternKS/

3 – Kansas State University Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work (Manhattan, Salina)  
 https://www.k-state.edu/sasw/sw/

4 – Newman University Master of Social Work Program (Wichita, Dodge City)  
 http://www.newmanu.edu/msw

5 – Pittsburg State University Social Work Program (Pittsburg)  
 http://www.pittstate.edu/department/social-sciences/social-work/

6 – University of Kansas School of Social Welfare (Lawrence, Overland Park, Kansas City)  
 http://www.socwel.ku.edu/

7 - Washburn University Social Work Department (Topeka)  
 http://www.washburn.edu/academics/college-schools/applied-studies/departments/social-work/index.html

8 - Wichita State University School of Social Work  
 http://webs.wichita.edu/?u=socialwork&p=index
Social Work

Exercises

Elements of Social Work
SOCIAL WORK CODE OF ETHICS

One of the aspects of professionalism in social work lies in the fact that social workers follow a code of Ethics adopted by the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW). Review these principles and values and consider your own values and principles. This section of the unit will allow you to participate in exercises that demonstrate some of the values. As you discuss the exercises, think about your values, but also imagine how they might be important in the profession of social work in the future.

Read the entire set of values and principles and then discuss each with your group. Following that discussion, there will be four exercises to demonstrate the values of social justice, dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, and competency.

NASW Code of Ethics – Ethical Principles

The following broad ethical principles are based on social work’s core values of service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These principles set forth ideals to which all social workers should aspire.

Value: Service

Ethical Principle: Social workers’ primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems. Social workers elevate service to others above self-interest. Social workers draw on their knowledge, values, and skills to help people in need and to address social problems. Social workers are encouraged to volunteer some portion of their professional skills with no expectation of significant financial return (pro bono service).

Value: Social Justice

Ethical Principle: Social workers challenge social injustice. Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers’ social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.
**Value: Dignity and Worth of the Person**

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person. Social workers treat each person in a caring and respectful fashion, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers promote clients’ socially responsible self-determination. Social workers seek to enhance clients’ capacity and opportunity to change and to address their own needs. Social workers are cognizant of their dual responsibility to clients and to the broader society. They seek to resolve conflicts between clients’ interests and the broader society’s interests in a socially responsible manner consistent with the values, ethical principles, and ethical standards of the profession.

**Value: Importance of Human Relationships**

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships. Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the wellbeing of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.

**Value: Integrity**

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner. Social workers are continually aware of the profession’s mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards and practice in a manner consistent with them. Social workers act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated.

**Value: Competence**

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise. Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.
SERVICE – UNDERSTANDING POVERTY

Value: Service
Ethical Principle: Social workers’ primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.

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LEARN MORE ABOUT POVERTY

The Miniature Earth Project http://www.miniature-earth.com/ (3:15 min)
Imagine the population of the world was turned into a small community of 100 people, keeping the same proportions existing today. Miniature Earth project numbers and facts are presented based on this assumption making it much easier for individuals to understand and value their own social, cultural and economic situation directly compared to others on the planet.

CCDH Tour of Poverty http://www.povertyusa.org/
An excellent website featuring a toolkit, video tour (4:05 min), and resources designed to focus on the more than 46 million Americans who have a difficult time making ends meet. The Tour of Poverty can be found at http://www.povertyusa.org/poverty-resources/audio-and-video/. An interactive poverty map that provides both national and county-level information: http://www.povertyusa.org/the-state-of-poverty/poverty-map-state/. The Poverty Toolkit is at http://www.povertyusa.org/poverty-resources/toolkit/


The story of one of today’s top 10 basketball players, Ben McLemore grew up in poverty where he was often hungry. This article quotes him as saying, “It’s hard to play basketball when nothing is inside of you.” There were often as many as 10 relatives and siblings in his 600 square ft. home where the one bed only had three legs. The home was filled with love, however, and his story, while inspirational, paints a realistic picture of the impact of poverty.
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<td>Even if you’re poor in the U.S., you’re doing pretty well because we’re the world’s wealthiest nation.</td>
<td>The U.S. ranks near the bottom of the world’s wealthiest countries in how well we care for children in poverty. Out of 24 nations, the U.S. ranked 19th and 23rd in critical areas of health, education and material well-being. (UNICEF, 2010)</td>
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<td>No one really goes hungry in the U.S.</td>
<td>One in six Americans lives in a household that is “food insecure,” meaning that in any given month, he or she will be out of money, out of food or forced to miss meals or seek assistance to feed themselves. The percentage of Americans who were food insecure in 2011 jumped 39% from 2007 to 2011. (U.S. Dept of Agriculture, 2012)</td>
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<td>Poverty doesn’t impact children as they are too young to understand finances.</td>
<td>Research shows that poverty is the single greatest threat to children’s well-being. It can impede their ability to learn and contribute to social, emotional and behavioral problems. It can contribute to poor physical and mental health. Risks are greatest for children who experience poverty when they are young and/or experience deep and persistent poverty. (National Center for Children in Poverty, 2012)</td>
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<td>People who are poor are generally lazy.</td>
<td>In 2010, more than 10.5 million people in poverty were “working poor” meaning that they were in the labor force for at least 27 weeks. (U.S. Dept of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012) In 2008, 64% of persons in poverty were not able to work due to their age (too young or too old), disability or the lack of jobs. Two-thirds of working people work 1.7 jobs.</td>
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<td>There are fewer children in poverty in the U.S. than adults.</td>
<td>The poverty rates for children are higher in every state than they are for adults. In Kansas, the child poverty rate is 19% (46,000). That is more than three times what it was in 2000 (14,000) and the 4th highest jump in the U.S. The 2011 adult poverty rate was 16%.</td>
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<td>FACT OR FICTION? MYTHS ABOUT POVERTY</td>
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<td>According to the U.S. Census, nearly three-fourths of persons living in poverty have a car or truck, and 31 percent have two or more cars or trucks. This means the situation is not as bad as the media makes it out to be.</td>
<td>When poor people purchase a vehicle, they purchase “as is” and as a result, experience constant breakdowns which result in lost jobs, missed appointments, and stress. Many live in areas where public transportation is not available.</td>
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<td>If a person makes minimum wage, he should be able to make it with careful budgeting. That’s the way the minimum wage is determined.</td>
<td>The federal minimum wage became $7.25/hr. in 2009. A single parent with one child working at minimum wage makes an annual salary of $15,080 before deductions or taxes—only $240 above the poverty threshold of $14,840. The poverty threshold for a family of 4 with two children under 18 is $22,881. Source: United States Department of Labor. U.S. Census Bureau.</td>
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<td>Anyone who has a full-time job can get health insurance from their employer.</td>
<td>According to the US Census Bureau, 26.9% of people with annual incomes less than $25,000 were uninsured in 2010 compared to 8% of people with incomes of $75,000 or more. 13% of Kansans are uninsured with 84% of those with at least one person in the family working full or part time and 53% working fulltime all year.</td>
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<td>In general, it costs everyone approximately the same percentage of income for food costs.</td>
<td>A 2012 report indicated that low-income ($15,000-$19,999) families spent 10.2% on food, middle income ($50,000-$69,999) spent 7.7% and wealthy (above $150,000) spent 5.4%. Because many grocery stores have moved away from low-income neighborhoods, the poor often buy from convenience stores or fast-food outlets that provide relatively cheap but fattening food. 23% of the national’s low-income are obese compared to 16% of middle and upper classes. (aha! Process, Inc. 2004)</td>
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<td>All U.S. children have equal opportunities to succeed in school.</td>
<td>Child born poor, at low birth weight, without health coverage, and who start school not ready to learn often fall behind and drop out. 22% of children who have lived in poverty do not graduate from high school compared with 6% of those who have never been poor.</td>
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SOCIAL JUSTICE – UNDERSTANDING CULTURE

**Value:** Social Justice

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Opening the Door to Dialog

**UNIVERSAL**
We are all human beings.

**GROUPS**
Some of us share common characteristics.

**INDIVIDUAL**
Each of us is unique with our own personalities, experiences, belief systems and relationships.

**STEREOTYPE**
A stereotype is employed when assumptions about an individual are made based on his or her inclusion in a group. It is a stopping point rather than a beginning point in understanding the individual.

**GENERALIZATION**
A generalization is used to understand some of the common characteristics shared by members of a group. It is a starting point toward understanding individuals within a group. Research shows that there are more in-group than between-group differences.

DIGNITY AND WORTH OF THE PERSON – NATURE OF RESPECT

Value: *Dignity and Worth of the Person*

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IMPARTANCE OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS – CONNECTION WITH FAMILY

Value: *Importance of Human Relationships*

**Ethical Principle:** *Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.* Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the wellbeing of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.
COMPETENCE – OBSERVATION AND DOCUMENTATION

**Value:** Competence

**Ethical Principle:** Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise. Social workers continually strive to increase their professional knowledge and skills and to apply them in practice. Social workers should aspire to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession.

Observation and documentation are two key social work skills. Some social workers see themselves as “translators.” They work directly with families and children and then write reports for judges, for supervisors, and for families themselves documenting progress or the lack of progress. As important, child protection social workers observe families in their environments and must document in writing the safety or well-being risks they observe.

Fortunately, on-going training is required by social work licensing regulatory boards, but more important, on-going training regarding new theories and evidence-based practice is an integral part of most social work jobs. The following exercises will help you understand how important building professional writing skills for the purpose of documentation. There’s a social work saying, “If it isn’t documented, it didn’t happen.” See what you can do here to “help it happen.”

**Observation directions:**

On the following page, you will see two different pictures of homes that were reported to be “messy” homes with elements of danger to the children living in the homes.

Compare the two and list any differences you see between them.

Many social workers struggle with identifying what is called the “dangers” or “child safety” issues when it comes to messy homes. Often a parent’s clinical depression or addictions prevent them from functioning to clean up a home. Child endangerment requires a situation in which the child is in danger, however, so look at the two photos and see if you can identify elements of danger.

The exercises following the comparison page will provide a chance for you to test your documentation and writing skills.
Home One: Do you see child safety issues in this room? List them here.

Home Two: Are there child safety issues in this room? List those here.
**EXERCISE 04 – DOCUMENTING CHILD ENDANGERMENT**

Part One – Study the case scenario and write a paragraph describing the situation. Make sure you use facts about what you observe. Once you complete your paragraph, compare it with the descriptions written by other students. Discuss which paragraphs provide the most objective description of child endangerment.

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<th>SCENARIO</th>
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<td>Mom and 14 month old infant live in an apartment with the infant’s father in and out. He and mother do not live together. Infant was referred to DCF when she was taken in for immunizations and sores and scratches were noted on her body and she appeared to be extremely hungry and malnourished. Mom reported that she tries to get the baby to eat, but that the baby refused “grown up food” and prefers the bottle. The scratches and sores were from “regular play” in the home. There are two cats in the home.</td>
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| DESCRIBE THE HOME |

| 1. Is the paragraph easily understood and relevant? What are the child protection concerns? |
| 2. Would a person reading your report be able to determine whether there was risk to the child or not? Is the age of the child relevant? |
| 3. What do you really like about your paragraph? |
| 4. Are there elements of other’s paragraphs that you could like to incorporate into your paragraph? |
| 5. How would you improve your documentation in the future? |
I observed the home to be cluttered with unwashed dishes on the counters, sink, and stove. The stove was observed as being extremely filthy with grease and crumbs of leftover food covering the top of the stove. The kitchen floor was observed as having a film of grease, dirt, and grime including cigarette butts and trash consuming much of the floor. There were clothes and trash on the floors and furniture. The entire apartment smelled of marijuana, soiled clothing, and urine. Baby's bottles were stored with her formula and dried food. I observed the bottles having a film of what appears to be formula in the bottles. I asked Mom if these are the clean bottles and she indicated they were. I asked to see the nipples for the bottles and observed them to be moldy with a dried filmy substance that appears to be formula still in the tip of the nipple. I observed unwashed clothes in laundry baskets on the floor, on beds and on couches throughout the entire apartment. I observed cigarette butts on the kitchen and living room floors. Baby's toys and walker were observed in the kitchen and living room mixed with trash and cigarette butts. Child appeared dirty with food and dirt on her face. When asked, Mom stated that baby crawls around the floor and pulls up to the furniture but does not yet walk.

1. Is the paragraph easily understood and relevant? How are the child protection concerns depicted? What do you see in the photographs? Any strengths?
2. Would a person reading the information be able to determine whether there was risk to the child?
3. What elements would you have written differently?
4. Is this a well-written piece of documentation?
5. What would you have written differently if the child were 12 years old?
BUILDING PROFESSIONAL WRITING SKILLS

Developing professional writing skills begins with a self-assessment. Please complete the two-part self-assessment below. Once complete, you’ll be asked to create an action plan for improving skills. The assessment and action plan are personal. You will not be asked to share the results with others, but you will be asked to commit to building strengths in the area to increase professionalism and the effectiveness of your writing.

Professional Writing Self-Assessment – Section One

Read each statement and mark the column that best describes the task for you. The review your responses and highlight areas you’d like to see improve.

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<tr>
<th>When it comes to professional writing, I</th>
<th>Yes/Always</th>
<th>Maybe/ Sometimes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Write short reminder notes to myself or others</td>
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<td>Write legibly or produce quality typed documents</td>
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<td>Write thorough and complete telephone messages</td>
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<td>Write reports that include all necessary contact information</td>
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<td>Write formal letters or emails to clients or colleagues</td>
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<td>Write a brief summary of a larger piece of text</td>
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<td>Write a report about an incidence using facts and evidence to support my understanding of what happened</td>
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<td>Write long pieces of text using features such as headings, tables of contents, footnotes</td>
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<td>Edit written materials to confirm proper grammar, spelling and formatting</td>
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<td>I provide and accept honest feedback about the quality of my and other’s writing skills</td>
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<td>Write with excellent grammar, use grammar and spell checks</td>
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<td>Proof or have someone proof and provide feedback</td>
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Goals for Improving My Professional Writing

I commit to setting two goals to improve my writing as a means of preparing for a career in social work. These are the things I will do to build skills:

1. 

2. 

Exercise 05
MANAGING STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Stress and its influence on the workplace has become a common theme amongst employers and researchers due to the fact that the levels of stress experienced today are greater than ever. In small amounts, stress can be helpful in that it provides a source of motivation and particularly in situations where one may become overwhelmed and want to give up. Stress can cause one to focus energy to “get the job done.”

In the helping professions, social workers not only deal with the challenges of dealing with situations where resources may be scarce or non-existent, but they also face a different type of stress called “secondary trauma.” Vicarious or secondary trauma results when the worker has an emotional reaction to the difficult and painful circumstances experienced by vulnerable children and families. The same type of stress is experienced by first responders to emergency or crisis situations.

Social workers also tend to struggle with work life balance because the needs of children and families are not always limited to the traditional work hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Families’ problems often occur in crisis situations and no matter how thorough an assessment may be, it is always difficult to experience the trauma of removing a child from the home and assisting families in managing the grief and pain of the complex problems they face.

In many professions today, stress management is considered a tool or a skill. Workers develop individual and personal strategies for managing stress and employers generally have well-thought-out employee assistance programs to support stress management. Of course, stress is experienced by all of us at one time or another. The Resources section of this module contains some quick and easy tips for reducing stress. As you plan your career, it will be important for you to learn ways to manage stress in your life so that when you enter the field, you’ll already be able to plan for managing the stress so that you can look forward to a healthy life as a social worker.

FACILITATOR DISCUSSION

- Why might managing stress be important?
- Do you experience stress now?
- What types of things create stress?
- How might secondary trauma be different than general stress from workload or deadlines?
- Do you think seeking counseling for stress is a good thing to do?
- What strategies do you use for managing stress?
  - Listening to music
  - Talking to an advisor/friend
  - Writing
  - Exercise – running, walking
  - Taking a trip
  - Enjoying a hobby
MANAGING STRESS - A CHILD WELFARE TOOL BOX

BREATHING BEATS STRESS

QUICK & EASY

- Sit or lie down.
- Inhale slowly and say to yourself, "I am . . . ."
- Exhale slowly and say to yourself, " . . . relaxed."

EXPERIENCING A FULL BREATH

- Try this exercise sitting, standing, and lying down.
- The exercise requires some practice to make the breath itself smooth. If you’re just beginning, you may want to limit your practice so that you do not become light-headed. Inhalation is through your nose and exhalation is through your mouth. Keep the tip of your tongue at the top of your mouth, right behind your top teeth.
  - Exhale deeply, smoothly and slowing to a count of 4 seconds.
  - Inhale slowly and smoothly pushing your abdomen out first and then your middle and upper lungs.
  - Hold your breath for a count of 8 seconds.
  - As you exhale, release all anxiety, tension and stress with your breath.
  - Repeat for five to ten rounds to begin and work up to 25-30 rounds several times each day or whenever you feel anxious or tense.
DESTRESS AT YOUR DESK
KU School of Social Welfare Workforce Initiative www.kwi.ku.edu

Think Gratitude
Expressing gratitude focuses you on the positive and brings an instant mood boost.

Treat Your Hands
Using your right hand, massage the base of your left thumb for 30 seconds and slowly work your way up to the thumb for 20 seconds. Then rub the flesh between thumb and forefinger for 10 seconds. Switch hands and repeat the process.

Do the Twist
Line your swivel chair up with your desk. Pick your feet up and use your fingertips on the edge of the desk to push your chair back. Inhale & swivel to the right. Keep your shoulders forward. Exhale and swivel to the left. Repeat for 15-20 breaths and you'll find you've loosened the muscles in your back and have released some energy.

Aroma Therapy
Create your own aroma therapy right at your desk with a bottle of essential oil such as lavender or vanilla, scents that soothe or invoke pleasant memories. When you're under stress simply open the bottle, close your eyes, inhale, and wait for the calm to arrive.

Side Stretch/ Back Arch
To increase circulation, raise both arms and stretch from one side to the other, holding the stretch for a few seconds on each side. Then, sit at the edge of your chair putting your hands behind you. Slowly arch backward, raising your chin as you do so. Squeeze your shoulder blades together.

Keep your Cool
If co-workers love extreme temperatures that interfere with your productivity, hold meetings in your office where it is comfortable.

Clutter can make you feel overwhelmed and stressed. Keep only your current project, materials in view to feel more confident and be able to concentrate.

Sight & Sound
Arrange the furniture in your cubicle so that you face away from traffic ways. You'll have more control over when people catch your attention and co-workers will be less likely to interrupt you. If your office is noisy, consider earplugs or escape to an empty conference room for a temporary "noise break."
SLOW-DOWN TECHNIQUES

10-SECOND BREATHING
If you find that your mind or body is racing out of control, slow down. Become conscious of your breathing. Try breathing deeply enough to take six breaths in a minute. Time yourself with a watch. Inhale for five seconds and exhale for five. Practice for two to five minutes until you have slowed the pace.

CHEST MASSAGE
Using the tips of your fingers, vigorously massage along the midline and across the chest below your collarbone. Try to open up your breathing and relax at the same time.

GEAR-UP TECHNIQUES

STRETCH AND MOVE
Stand up and stretch. Arch your back and stretch your arms and fingers out to the side. Hold that posture for a while and then let go. Now move your body all around to get the blood pumping. Clap your hands. Jump up and down. MOVE!

BODY BRACER
Gently pat or tap all over your body in an energizing rhythm. Keep it up until you tingle all over and are charged up.

KEEP AN EYE ON IT
Stretch your eye muscles by following the hands of an imaginary clock around the hours starting at 12:00. Keeping your head still, sweep your gaze around the clock. Reverse and repeat making the circle size and speed larger and faster as you go.

LOOSEN-UP TECHNIQUES

BREATHE INTO TENSION
Close your eyes and take a deep breath. As you become aware of any points of tension, "breathe into" that spot, allowing the breath to bring calm to the area and carry away tension as you exhale.

SHAKE A LEG
Stand up and shake an arm, a leg, the other arm, the other leg, and your whole body. Then take a deep breath and let yourself go limp all over.

SLEEP STRATEGIES

OPEN UP!
Try sleeping with an open window or lowering the temperature of your bedroom. Lowering the core body temperature helps induce a feeling of sleepiness.

SHUT IT OUT!
Turn off all sources of artificial light and if that’s still not dark enough, try using a sleep mask.
According to Harvard research, biases thought to be absent or extinguished remain as “mental residue” in most of us. Studies show that people can be consciously committed to tolerance and acceptance and then can even work hard to act in ways that are free of prejudice, yet they can still possess unrecognized negative prejudices or stereotypes.

Psychologists at Harvard, the University of Virginia and the University of Washington created Project Implicit to develop Hidden Bias Tests (Implicit Association Tests – IATs) to measure unconscious bias.

This website presents a method to demonstrate the conscious-unconscious divergences very convincingly. Try the tests in categories gender/career, Arab/Muslim, weapons, light skin/dark skin, black/white, gay/straight, Native American/White American, gender/science, fat/thin, Judaism/other religion, disabled/abled, presidential popularity, and young/old.

**SELF CARE AND SOCIAL WORK**
*Washburn University School of Social Work Self-Care Center*

The Washburn College School of Social Work has a web page devoted to self care for the helper. The mission of the school and the site is to provide support and resources that will empower social work students in the development of professional self-care skills.

Visit the site to find information in the categories Developing Your Self-Care Plan; Self-Care for the Helper; Self-Care Readings. The site also provides self-assessment checklists and measures including a Professional Quality of Life Scale and How I Typically Act Toward Myself in Difficult Times.