Elements of Social Work

The development of this curriculum was supported through a cooperative agreement between the University of Kansas, School of Social Welfare and the U.S. DHHS/ACF Children’s Bureau, Grant Number 90CT0150. The contents of the publication are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Children’s Bureau. Curriculum development and collaboration with the Kansas Department of Education by Kathleen Holt, MLS, Project Coordinator.
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 *(• denotes masters’ level programs)*

1 – Bethel College Social Work Program (Newton)  
http://www.bethels.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
EXPLORING THE ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL WORK

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 well-being 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.

FACILITATOR QUESTIONS

- Social work is one of many professionals in the category human services. What are some others and how might social work be different?

- Social justice refers to social workers working with the vulnerable and working with a diverse group of clients. What vulnerable populations exist in your region? What experiences make families vulnerable? What skills would social workers need to work with vulnerable families in your region?

- Social workers often say that engaging with a person begins where the person is. To do that, social workers much avoid judging individuals. Of course, the goal is to keep kids safe. Do you think that remaining non-judgmental would be difficult?

- Research has shown that maintaining connections is extremely important for children in foster care and for their families. Have you ever had a family member move away from home? What was that experience like? How might it be for a young child? Why would this be an important value in social work?

- Integrity is a part of most professions. Why would it be important in social work?

- If competence is continually striving to increase skills, how could you demonstrate competence in preparation for a career in social work?
SERVICE – UNDERSTANDING POVERTY

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).

Facilitator Notes:
The goal of this exercise is to support students’ understanding of the impact of poverty and the fact that poverty exists all around them. Families experiencing poverty may be homeless, but some homeless people are education, others are not. Some families in poverty actually hold jobs and others do not. It is important for social workers to understand the world from others’ points of view and not just their own. For example, children in foster care may not have the resources to participate in sports or to buy uniforms or shoes. Social workers sometimes use creative strategies for making sure youth in the foster care system have access to such opportunities.

Preparation: Each student will need a pen or pencil and a blank sheet of paper. The Facilitator will need a stop watch or timer.

Instructions:

1. Instruct students to fold their paper into quarters.

2. Tell students the instructions for the exercise will be brief and the time periods will be brief as well. This is a brain-storming exercise and they must respond quickly. They will use the top left side of the paper first, then the bottom left, then top right and finally, lower right with only that segment showing for each period of the exercise. When the Facilitator announces “go” they are to quickly number and write down as many qualities of the topic you announce as possible. When all understand the instructions, begin.

3. The exercise has four, 30-second time periods. Announce “begin” and “stop” and move through the four periods quickly. The topics are: Negative stereotypes of people in poverty. Positive stereotypes of people in poverty. Positive stereotypes about people with middle-class income. Negative stereotypes about people with middle-class income.
4. When students are finished, discuss the similarities and differences in their lists. Ask whether or not it was easier to develop one list than another. Ask whether or not students were aware of their feelings about poverty.

5. After this portion of the exercise, use any of the following resources to learn more about poverty.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT POVERTY**

**The Miniature Earth Project**
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. Excellent video and support materials.

**CCDH Tour of Poverty**
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/](http://www.povertyusa.org/poverty-resources/audio-and-video/). An interactive poverty map that provides both national and county-level information can be found at [http://www.povertyusa.org/the-state-of-poverty/poverty-map-state/](http://www.povertyusa.org/the-state-of-poverty/poverty-map-state/). The Poverty Toolkit is at [http://www.povertyusa.org/poverty-resources/toolkit/](http://www.povertyusa.org/poverty-resources/toolkit/)


**Ben McLemore: KU Jayhawk**
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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>DATA AND TRENDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACT OR FICTION? MYTHS ABOUT POVERTY</td>
<td>DATA AND TRENDS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T F ? STATEMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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.</strong></td>
<td><strong>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.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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.</strong></td>
<td><strong>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.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anyone who has a full-time job can get health insurance from their employer.</strong></td>
<td><strong>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 full-time all year.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In general, it costs everyone approximately the same percentage of income for food costs.</strong></td>
<td><strong>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)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All U.S. children have equal opportunities to succeed in school.</strong></td>
<td><strong>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.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SOCIAL JUSTICE – UNDERSTANDING CULTURE

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.

Facilitator Notes

Preparation: Print EXERCISE – ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL WORK (found at the end of the Teachers’ Guide) on card stock (front to back). Cut cards into quarters so that each card has one cultural element on it and the instructions on the reverse. Each student participating will have one card with one cultural element on it. Make sure the cards are distributed so that a fairly even number of students have one of the four cards.

PowerPoint: Elements of Social Work – Social Justice

Slide One: Introduction

Slide Two:
The fact is, talking about culture and culturally responsive practice is not easy. Native American author and social worker Terry Cross suggests that one reason for that is that “culture is to people as water is to fish.” What does Terry Cross mean?

What types of things does the water (culture) represent to the individual? People aren’t aware sometimes of what culture is, but there are always elements of culture.

In one family, it was the custom that the women fixed the food and that the men always ate first. In another family, the women fixed the food and served the children first and then the men ate. Imagine that a new bride came from the second family, but married into the first family. Would her husband think to tell her about the custom or the “culture” in his family or would it just be the way it was done?

What other examples of culture in families can you think of? How, when and where do you celebrate holidays, for example?

Slide Three:
In order to demonstrate the ethical principle of social justice, social workers are attentive to understanding culture and particularly diversity. They embrace understanding other
cultures and the in-group differences as well as cross-cultural differences. Have any of you ever made what is called a cultural faux pas? (FOE-paw)

When a social worker engages with a family, as you heard in the realistic job preview, it is often in response to a crisis. It can be stressful, yet the social workers job is to build a working relationship with the family and each family member in order to work together to meet case plan goals and achieve safety, permanency and well-being for the children. To be effective, the social worker must be skilled at communication and particularly aware of and open to learning about cultural differences.

Some misunderstandings might be unavoidable. We can’t know everything. Can you think of some examples when you might have made a cultural mistake? One social worker talked about being raised in a family where everyone knew that no one but her father sat in a specific chair. Once a salesperson came to their house and sat in her father’s chair. Needless to say, no sale was made that day. What would have happened if the salesperson had been a social worker there to assess whether child abuse had occurred? Can you think of other examples?

Slide Four:
Of course, we will all make cultural faux pas at one time or another. By being open to discuss our mistakes, we can better understand one another. Opening the Door to Dialog is a tool for understanding the engagement process. In order to work with families, social workers have to get to know each individual and each family as a unique unit unlike any other.

All understanding starts with exploring what we have in common. Look at the diagram and think about the fact that there are things we all have in common. Using your handout, write some of those down. (We all breathe, sleep, have parents, and need food and shelter.)

But it’s also true that there are things that we share with some people and not with others. For example, some of us are female and others male. What are some shared characteristics or groups? (religion; physical characteristics such as being blonde, redhead, brunette; preferences such as basketball or tennis, art or reading; talents such as singing or athletics; language; education as juniors or seniors or Blue Jays or Eagles; profession as in student, teacher, doctor, or carpenter).

But what do we know about someone if, for example, we’ve just been introduced to a Methodist teacher wearing a Chief’s hoodie as he’s walking a chocolate Lab? Two recent high school graduates may be alums of the same school, but one may want a career as a web developer and the other a social worker. In order to understand a family or another person, we have to seek to know the individual or unique characteristics of each. These are the things that make us unique. Those vary from individual to individual. I might like thick crust and you like thin, even if we both belong to the “love pizza” group. What are some other examples to list under individual characteristics?
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.

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.

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.

Slide Five:
Looking at the tools for dialog sheet, it is easy to see that we have to use generalizations to understand other people. It’s not a bad thing to acknowledge that you are Italian or that you are a Christian. We make friends and establishing and deepen relationships by learning about one another. What’s one of the first things you ask when you meet someone new? Where are you from? . . . Have you ever said, “Oh, I know someone from that town! Do you know . . . ?”

Where we get into trouble is when we assume that we know someone about another person as a result of generalizing about them. For example, just because you may have grown up in a small town, does that mean you can’t live successfully in a city? Maybe you can, but maybe you don’t like living in a city. One way to think about generalizations and how they can be used to establish relationships is to think of them as starting points.

Culture specific information about history, language, or cultural traditions and customs may or may not be true about one particular family or individual, but it can be useful in getting to know the family. For example, if I am introduced to a Latino person, should I assume that the individual speaks Spanish? Should I assume that he or she loves spicy food? Some of these examples are based on information I may have from knowing other Latinos and some may be based on media or television presentations, but the truth is, I need to know more before I know whether the individual whom I’m meeting speaks Spanish and before I can learn what his or her favorite foods might be.

In social work, this is important. For example, statistics show that a high percentage of Latino children live in two-parent families and that the average size of a Latino family is larger than those of Caucasian families. What might happen if a social worker just assumes that the family with whom she is to work is a large family with two-parents? Are single parent families mostly Caucasian? We’d have to know more, wouldn’t we?

Slide Six:
Being sensitive to culture requires us to be aware of the stereotypes we may hold. One example would be assuming that all Latinos are from Mexico or that all Latinos speak Spanish. When we stereotype, we assume. We stop inquiring and stop under the assumption that we know all we need to know. Stereotypes are stopping points. List some of the common stereotypes about poverty. Poor people are uneducated. Is that true or not? Poor people are lazy. True? Not true? How would you know?

You can see, then, that avoiding stereotypes is an important tool in understanding culture and its role in family systems. By using the tools for dialog, by seeking out the unique, the individual, we can better understand a person or a family.
Slide Seven:
In this exercise, you will be given a card that contains one of four Latino cultural traits. Each of the traits describes a generalized element of culture that may play itself out differently in each family. And, sometimes, if there is a significant population of a culture in an area, other cultural groups adopt some of the traits.

So, remember, in this exercise, we'll be starting with a generalization and learning more about how that trait plays out with others in the group. At the same time, we'll be considering and sharing how the trait does or does not apply to our own story and culture. To begin, we'll review each one of the cards.

Slide Eight:
The cultural trait on this card is “familia.” On the screen, you will see what is called a *dicho* (DEE-show). A *dicho* is a saying or a proverb. You may have heard “No sooner said than done?” That is one example, in Spanish “Dicho y hecho”. Are any of you familiar with dichos? (Collect examples and if not, move on.)

If you are not, you will learn some here. (Spanish speaking class members may read the Spanish versions.) Do not consider useless the advice of an old person. What does that say about Latino culture?

In this exercise, we'll ask you to think about the cultural concept and discuss whether or not that is something that also describes your own culture and if so, how. If not, what are some examples about how your family thinks about its older members or about family in general.

“Familia includes generations of family members and is our core of stability and strength. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins all play critical roles in our lives. Our connection is strong and the good of the family comes before that of individual members. Children are cherished and looked after by the entire familia, and respeto for elders is instilled in them. High regard for non-family members is shown by granting them family titles (tio, hermano, etc.) as symbols of love and respect.” -From *Latino Families*, a publication of Casa de Esperanza

Slide Nine:
*Fatalismo* refers to the belief that some things are meant to happen no matter what. Understanding that a person might believe that things are merely a result of fate or luck or powers beyond one's control would be important if you are a social worker and want to work with that person to change.

What are some examples in your family? Have you heard the phrase, “That's life?” In the exercise, if you have this card, you'll think about how this concept plays out in your family. *Culturally, it is the belief that some things are meant to happen regardless of individual intervention; events are a result of luck, fate or powers beyond one's control.*

Santiago-Rivera
Slide Ten:

*Personalísimo*: represents an orientation where the person is always more important than the task at hand, including the time factor. People give allegiance to a political leader rather than to constitutional institutions or ideals. Characteristic of a collectivist worldview, there is a great deal of emotional investment in the family. High importance is given to the qualities of positive interpersonal and social skills such that family members, both nuclear and extended, maintain mutual dependency and closeness for a lifetime. The valuing of warm, friendly and personal relationships has important implications for service delivery and environments (e.g. public or private agency offices and staff) that can be impersonal and formal. For instance, the way that a receptionist greets the family seeking help and the personal communication style of workers can determine whether or not the Latino family returns.  (Bracero, 1998 in Santiago-Rivera)

Slide Eleven:

Collectivism: a cluster of interrelated values that emphasize the interdependence of family members. Within this value system, children are taught to be helpful to others and to contribute to the success of any group they belong to – beginning with the family. In contrast, social institutions in the U.S. foster individualism, viewing the child as an individual who should be developing independence and valuing individual achievement. (Rothstein-Fisch, Greenfield & Turmbull, 2000)

Slide Twelve:

Leave this slide on the screen as the students participate in the exercise.

THE EXERCISE

Format:

Each member of the class will be given one of the cultural trait cards. Participants are instructed to move about the room and approach a person with a cultural trait different from their own. One of the two participants describes his/her trait and gives an explanation as to whether the trait applies to his/her experience and family or whether it does not seem to. Encourage students to give one or two examples. Then the other participant does the same. The exchanges should not last more than five minutes tops as the goal is to learn something about as many perspectives as possible.

The Facilitator may decide when to end the exercise.

Slide Thirteen:

Gracias!

Ask students about their experiences.

- What differences did they find?
- Where there similarities they hadn’t expected?
- Ask if they became aware of any stereotypes they’d held without realizing it.
- What did they learn from the experience?

Thank students for their participation.

Close the exercise.
DIGNITY AND WORTH OF THE PERSON – NATURE OF RESPECT

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.

FACILITATOR NOTES

Preparation: This exercise requires a can of Playdough for each participant. The Facilitator will need the script. Desks should be arranged so that each participant can move from one desk or table to another during the exercise.

Discussion:
The NASW ethical principle emphasizes the important of clients’ rights to self-determination as well as the importance of being respectful of each client’s individual differences and cultural diversity. This principle is very important in child welfare where it may be easy to judge a person’s actions harshly and particularly when it comes to a child’s welfare. Learning to understand and respect another person’s experience and culture requires understanding the importance of identity and story and a commitment to balancing the safety standards set by our society.

Discuss the students’ understanding of this principle. Some may struggle with the issues of child abuse. The principle does not suggest that one ignores any mistakes, but instead respects that a parent has a right to change or to attempt to change. Laws are in place to make sure a child’s needs are met if parents are unable to accomplish clearly set case plan goals, but parents have the right to try. For some parents, long-term addictions or mental health issues may not be resolved in a timely fashion and their rights may be terminated. If that happens both parents and child grieve the loss and it is important to understand the complexities of abuse and neglect which respecting the dignity and worth of both parent and child.

This exercise is a guided imagery that will demonstrate the importance of respect.
THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF RESPECT

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: One tub of play dough for each participant

Directions:

1. Have participants clear the area in front of them by closing and stacking materials.

2. Ask participants to identify common symbols ($, peace sign, stop sign, universal no sign, etc.) and chart answers.

3. Have participants settle back in their seats and to prepare for a quiet period during which they will consider symbols. When all are comfortable, read (or recite from memory) the following:

   Please close your eyes or look down in order to focus for a few moments on the idea of symbols. Part of the purpose of looking down or closing your eyes is to give privacy to the person sitting next to you.

Now, take several deep breaths and let them out slowly.

When you’re relaxed, I’d like to ask you to think of symbol that might represent YOU. It could be one that is easily recognizable or, on the other hand, it might be something only recognizable by you. The symbol should be something that represents who you really are. . . . What is important to you? It could be one that reflects your values . . . . your goals. . . . What you truly treasure in life . . . . Think of a symbol that reflects who you are . . . .the way you live your life . . . Maybe it represents a major decision you have made. . . or a turning point in your life . . . or a success you have had. Again, it might be recognizable only to you or it could be something anyone else might know. Either way, it is a symbol that represents YOU.

Take a minute to get a clear picture in your mind of your symbol.

- Silence for one minute.

Now, imagine that you are approaching a large museum. You are walking up the stone steps and see two, large, carved doors in front of you. As you walk past tall pillars, you see that the doors open and there, right inside is your symbol on a pedestal in the middle of the room.
Walk around your symbol. See it from every side, even from the top and from the back. You can see how tall it is . . . how thick it is . . . how wide it is. Take a good look at your symbol there on the pedestal. When you have your symbol clearly in your mind, open your eyes or look up.

When participants open their eyes, there should be a tub of play dough in front of them. Announce the following:

Please make your symbol with the play dough in front of you. You will not be asked to reveal what your symbol means to you at any time during this activity. However, there are some rules we would like for you to follow:

First, this entire activity is a silent one. Please refrain from talking. The experience will be enhanced for you if you concentrate silently. You will have time at the end to share your experiences if you choose to do so.

Second, use only the material from your own can of play dough. No mixing of colors. If you do not use all of the play dough for your symbol, place the remaining clay in the container and put the lid on it.

Third, don’t worry about making your symbol perfectly. This is not an art exercise. As long as you know what your symbol is, you’ll benefit from the exercise. The important thing is that it is as close to what you visualized as you can make it.

You’ll have ten minutes to create your symbol.

All ten minutes for participants to create their symbols. Notice when people finished. If necessary, give a three, two and one-minute warning.

Do not move on until all are finished. When they are finished, thank them for remaining quiet and ask them to continue the silence.

Have participants stand up and move to the right at least two tables away (or seven seats) and have them sit down in front of the symbol they find there.

Now, still remaining quiet, change the symbol in front of you. Make it better. Improve it in some way. If you like, you may even start over. The only limit on your effort is that you may only use the color in front of you. If there is no play dough left in the tub, then you must make a change to the existing sculpture.

Everyone MUST make a change, an improvement.
Give participants five minutes, giving a one-minute warning when most are nearly complete.

When all are finished, have them return to their seats, again in silence.

Process either in writing or as a group by answering the following questions:

How did it feel to leave your symbol in someone else’s hands? What were you thinking? Feeling?

How did you feel about the “improvements” made to your symbol?

How many of you feel that whoever worked on changing your symbol absolutely understood what it was?

How many feel that they absolutely did NOT understand your symbol?

How did it feel to improve someone else’s symbol?

How is this activity similar to our work with families?

What might have made a difference in your feelings about someone making changes to your symbol?

At the conclusion of this exercise, you may want to provide time for participants to talk with one another or to “make amends” for the changes they made.
IMPORTANCE 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 well-being of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities.

FACILITATOR NOTES:

In this exercise, we will focus on the feelings of a child being removed from his or her home and the importance of making certain that children see their parents often and regularly. The goal of most child welfare cases is to reunify children and parents as soon as possible. The bonds between children and parents may have been disrupted but in most cases, maintaining the relationship between parent and child is required for the child’s developmental needs to be met. In addition, children who are placed in out-of-home care struggle with a sense of abandonment which is reduced when the child is able to maintain connection with his/her parent.

Child welfare outcomes require social workers to provide regular, consistent opportunities for visits with the biological parents. The visits support a child’s sense of belonging and the offer ongoing reassurance and reinforcement of social networks and with siblings and other extended family and kin. Children separated from their parents often experience trauma and they need to be allowed to grieve and express their feelings in a safe, supportive environment. Seeing their parents can reduce a child’s fantasies or fears of “bad things” happening to a parent and can help alleviate feelings of self-blame for being removed from the home.

Introducing the Guided Imagery

The facilitator states that he/she will walk participants through a guided imagery exercise that will require them to close their eyes and visualize the images that the facilitator will describe. The participants will assume the role described in the scenario.

The facilitator should have an area of the room or in another room for class members who do not wish to participate in the guided imagery. No blame should be placed on those who may not wish to participate. For youth who may have been involved in the child welfare system, the guided imagery may evoke strong
emotions, so the facilitator may wish to have a co-leader on hand to debrief with students and/or to supervise those who do not wish to participate. The Facilitator asks students to close their eyes and to get comfortable. Emphasize that being quiet and respectful of the experiences of others is important in a guided imagery. There will be points in the exercise when students are asked questions. They are to answer internally rather than out loud, but they are to answer from the perspective of the person they are “being” in the scenario.

In a friendly, pleasant tone of voice, read the following. Read fairly slowly and leave pauses for students to envision the situation:

You are in a vehicle with your family. You go to the airport and board a plane. You and the rest of your family are sitting in different aisles. While sitting in your seat you cannot see the rest of your family. You have no idea where you are going – because it is a surprise.

Once you land, you deplane and walk out into a concrete block building with no windows. The room is huge with very high ceilings. You haven’t noticed how cold the room is because you are busy trying to find your family. Suddenly, you are cold. You search every part of the building you are in. You have no idea how to get out of the building. You continue to look and even call out your family’s names. Finally, you realize they are not there. You start asking people where you are, but when you do, you realize you do not speak the same language everyone else in the room speaks.

(What are you feeling? What would you do?)

After an hour or so, a very tall, thin man with an unusually long beard comes up to you and starts talking to you. You can’t understand what he is saying. He seems to be getting a little frustrated with you and just starts motioning to you to follow him. You are not sure what you should do. You decide to go with him because you don’t know what else to do and besides maybe he is taking you to your family.

(What are you feeling now?)

You and the stranger leave the building you are in and walk in silence for quite some time. You have no idea how long it has been because you have recently lost your watch. You are walking down dirt streets and looking at sights you have never seen before. Some of these sights are beautiful and others scare you. The stranger finally turns around and motions you to
open the door to your left. The building he is asking you to enter looks different than anything you have ever seen. You have no idea what is store for you on the other side of the door. You reluctantly start to push open the door.

(What are feeling? What reactions would you have at this point?)

Inside the building are several people sitting on the floor. They look like they could be a family. There are several adults and several children. The stranger motions for you to sit down on the floor next to those already there. There is a lot of talking between everyone there, but you do not understand any of it.

(What are you feeling?)

The bearded stranger brings out dishes of food. You are thankful because you haven’t eaten in a while. When the dishes are put on the floor, you realize that you don’t recognize anything on the plates. You can’t even begin to guess what you are being offered.

(What are you feeling? What will you do?)

You haven’t eaten and are feeling quite hungry. You taste some of the food and concluded that you just can’t stomach it. No one says anything to you. The stranger then offers you a blanket and toothpaste. This makes you realize this is where you are spending the night and you have no other clothes.

Then it hits you, as you think, ‘Where is my family? How long will I be here?’

(What are you feeling?)

All of the people in the dwelling wrap themselves in their blankets; blow out the candles and go to sleep. You have not eaten, you have no clothes, you have no idea where you family is and if they are safe, and you do not know where you are. And you have no idea how long this will last.
(What are you feeling?)
Time passes and you have now found your parents. You were so happy to see them and to know that they were all right. They took you home and you slept in your own bed. You ate your favorite foods. You played with your siblings.

(How are you feeling now?)

After a pause, the Facilitator states that the guided imagery is coming to a close. Ask participants to take a deep breath or two and to return to the room, still remaining quiet. When everyone has opened his/her eyes, move to the debriefing.

Debriefing:

What feelings did you experience as you were guided through the scenario?
What reactions do you think you might have had if you were really in this situation?
What would you want to do to get out of this situation?

The Facilitator summarizes the group's responses into the following feelings and reactions concerning the experience:

• Feelings:
  o Fear of the unknown and potential personal harm.
  o Feelings of abandonment.
  o Loss of everything that is familiar and stable.
  o Concerns of whether or not you will be fed something you can eat.
  o Feeling sad, lonely, empty, depressed, and hopeless.
  o Feelings of helplessness; an inability to find a way to get home again.
  o Anger at having been forced into this situation.

• Reactions:
  o Wanting to run to find help.
  o Wanting to hide from the strangers around them.
  o Want to fight all those around them to get out of the situation and find their family.
  o Give up and let things happen as they will.

The feelings the participants just experienced are the same or similar for children who have been removed from their homes and enter the foster care system. Separation and the loss creates very strong emotions such as uncertainty, feelings of abandonment, helplessness and anger. After experiencing this, does social work's core value of connectedness make sense?
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.

**Facilitator Notes:**

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.

**FACILITATOR NOTES:**
Facilitate discussion of the two rooms presented. The first room is basically cluttered and while the clutter may be of concern, there are no obvious signs of clutter that would endanger a child. The second photograph, however, shows unstable cabinets as well as old and possibly spoiled food.
Exercise 05

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.

SCENARIO
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.

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?
EXERCISE 04 – DOCUMENTING CHILD ENDANGERMENT

Part Two - In this section, you will critique some documentation that is to be included as part of a court report. Study the photograph and the case scenario presented before. Critique the material and answer the questions below.

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?

WRITE A SENTENCE DESCRIBING A CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN AND WRITE ONE DESCRIBING A STRENGTH
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When it comes to professional writing, I</th>
<th>Yes/Always</th>
<th>Maybe/ Sometimes</th>
<th>No/Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write short reminder notes to myself or others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write legibly or produce quality typed documents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write thorough and complete telephone messages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write reports that include all necessary contact information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write formal letters or emails to clients or colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a brief summary of a larger piece of text</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a report about an incidence using facts and evidence to support my understanding of what happened</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write long pieces of text using features such as headings, tables of contents, footnotes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edit written materials to confirm proper grammar, spelling and formatting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I provide and accept honest feedback about the quality of my and other’s writing skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write with excellent grammar, use grammar and spell checks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proof or have someone proof and provide feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.                                                                                      
   ____________________
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
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.
Collectivism is a value in loyalty to, and the contribution of, the group as opposed to focusing on a particular individual.

El que es ciego de nación, nunca sabe por dónde anda.

He who is blind to his own nation will never know where he is traveling.

Culturally, it is the belief that some things are meant to happen regardless of individual intervention; events are a result of luck, fate or powers beyond one’s control.

Santiago-Rivera

fatalismo

Cuando te toca, te toca.
When it’s your time, it’s your time.

Personalismo represents an orientation where the person is always more important than the task at hand, including the time factor. Characteristic of a collectivist worldview, there is a great deal of emotional investment in the family. High importance is given to the qualities of positive interpersonal and social skills such that family members, both nuclear and extended, maintain mutual dependency and closeness for a lifetime. The valuing of warm, friendly and personal relationships has important implications for service delivery and environments (e.g. public or private agency offices and staff) that can be impersonal and formal.

Caras vemos, corazones no sabemos.
We see the faces but we do not know the heart.
Consider the cultural trait on the reverse. Each trait is illustrated by a *dicho* – a saying in Spanish that represents important cultural wisdom in Latino families. Think about your own experience as it relates to this trait. Once you've had a moment to do that, discuss your trait with others whose traits may be different. Compare experiences.