



Building the World's Capacity to Protect Children and Strengthen Families



We Celebrate Social Workers

March is Social Worker appreciation month, a time to honor the compassion, grit, and dedication of social workers who strive to make the world a better place. Many obstacles exist in this profession including minimal resources or services, client trauma, poverty, and poor family engagement, among countless others. Social workers all have a story to tell about why they chose the glamour, prestige, great hours, and high salaries of the sector...and we must, because without it we would not desire to come alongside some of the most vulnerable in our society.

I remember sitting in my dorm room in 1990 as a Pre-Med, Biology major and having a big revelation that I was going down the wrong path and needed to explore other avenues to help those in need. You can imagine that call to my parents, "Mom, Dad...umm, I no longer want to be a surgeon, but want to be a social worker instead" (crickets chirping for a good, long while on the other end). They did eventually respond, and ultimately are proud of the work I have been a part of over the years...but I'm sure they grieved a bit about the decision, having little understanding about the hope and healing that social workers bring to the world.

Over my nearly 30 years as a social worker, I have primarily served children and families as a mental health case manager, clinician, assessor, and more recently in management and senior administration roles. I have worked closely with those having psychotic breaks, suicidal ideation, addiction, and victims of sexual abuse and human trafficking, physical abuse and neglect. My work has been both stateside and in the developing world, and I must say that in some countries where I have worked, there was not a single social worker or therapist trained on how to treat trauma. While we are rich with resources in the US in

comparison, there still never seems to be enough to meet the vast needs of those we serve.

Like everyone in the profession, there are events that will forever change us. For me, some of those moments included nearly being stabbed with a butcher knife while assessing a 7-year-old for services; feeling occasionally unsafe meeting with clients in prison or on the ward for those who were incompetent to stand trial; hearing the horrors of fishermen in Thailand who were survivors of trafficking; and kids suffering unthinkable levels of abuse, to name a few.



Those instances were sobering, but like social workers do, we keep pushing forward...learning...growing...trying to stay motivated and hopeful as we work with those in need. I also remember the countless families making progress; the trauma wounds beginning to heal; the women, children, and families defying all odds to thrive amidst the harshest of circumstances. I have seen the remarkable ability of the human spirit to recover time and time again...and it is these encounters, these interventions, and these memories that keep us motivated to continue serving, to bring light to those in their darkest hour.

We at the Institute for Human Services acknowledge social workers this month, and every month. We see you; we value you, and all that you do for those in the world who need a helping hand. We know that the road is full of curves and potholes, but keep your chin up, and find fresh ways to care for yourself, so that you can continue having empathy to serve those who need it most. Thank you, social workers! We appreciate all that you do each day as you go about making the world a better place to live.

Mike Nowlin, MSSA, LISW-S
Director of Operations
Institute for Human Services

Institute for Human Services | 1706 E. Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43203

[Unsubscribe syingling@ihs-trainet.com](mailto:Unsubscribe_syingling@ihs-trainet.com)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent bysyingling@ihs-trainet.comin collaboration with



Try email marketing for free today!