

NASW Social Work Month 2004



The Power of
Social Work:
Pass It On.

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Welcome *Letter*

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Welcome to the all-new outreach toolkit for 2004.

We're very excited this year, not only because of the new campaign theme—"The Power of Social Work: Pass It On," which we'll explain a little later—but also because this is a whole new concept for us. This toolkit was designed to act as a valuable resource for your outreach efforts, not just for Social Work Month but *all year long*.

Plus, there are a number of new features for this year's toolkit, including:

1. An updated and more robust **Observance Calendar**, which includes the sponsors—where appropriate—for each observance. This will help you develop cooperative or co-sponsorship opportunities with different local chapters of organizations.
2. An all-new **Packaged Practice Area** section, giving you templates for press releases, electronic press pitches, and letters to the editor for each of our eight areas of specialty.
3. Materials—from press releases and letters to the editor, to electronic media pitches and op-ed articles—that have been carefully crafted to emphasize (not just mention) a local angle for these materials. These "fill in the blanks" sections are numerous but easy to follow, and go a long way toward making your story interesting to a chosen media's audience.
4. Live-read 15- and 30-second **Public Service Announcements (PSAs)** for you to distribute to your local radio stations.
5. All the electronic files you need can be found right here on the NASW Web site www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/SWM2004

The theme for this year's Social Work Month, as we said earlier, is "The Power of Social Work: Pass It On." This has special meaning to us because, as social workers:

- We pass the power of our work on to the **people** whom we help, giving them renewed hope.
- We pass the **purpose** of social work on to the community to show how our role benefits everyone.
- We pass the **passion** of social work on from one generation of social workers to the next through education, training and mentoring.

There's another reason this toolkit is special to us. This year, we've called many of you and asked for your input. So, we wish to thank all the chapters who took the time to speak with us and give us your honest and in-depth thoughts. In fact, your feedback was so helpful and inspiring that this year we've decided to include a short reply survey on our Web site (www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/SWM2004). Providing us with your thoughts will only take a few minutes, but could make a world of difference in improving this toolkit, so that we can continue to supply you with the materials you need to educate others about social work and its importance.

On behalf of all of us at NASW headquarters in Washington, D.C., to all of you everywhere, we thank you sincerely for your dedication and devotion to our profession and your community. And remember: The Power of Social Work: Pass It On!

Sincerely Yours,



Gary Bailey, MSW
President



Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH
Executive Director

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I. *Tips*

TIPS ON USING THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to help you spread the word about the social work profession, primarily through gaining positive coverage in the media. Such stories create strong third-party endorsements for our issues and actions.

Conveniently, “The Power of Social Work: Pass It On” 2004 toolkit **is designed for year-round use**. We’ve made available public relations materials in this kit to work in conjunction with monthly, weekly, and daily observances, such as Hunger Awareness Month, School Counseling Week, and National Anxiety Screening Disorders Day. Where possible, we have also included the sponsoring organizations so you can partner with them on events.

You’ll notice that **all** of the materials have “blanks” for localization. We strongly encourage you to fill in these blanks with the appropriate information. This gives reporters the “local angles” they need, and makes your submission more meaningful to their specific audiences. And, if clients that you’ve worked with would be willing to speak with the media about their positive experiences with social workers, all the better.

We recommend you send releases and pitches to the attention of a reporter who’s written specifically about community social events or cause-related news (e.g., health, senior, community news, etc.). If you don’t know the name of such a reporter, just send the items to the attention of the publication’s editor. Your media distribution list should include specialized communication outlets like African American, Hispanic/Latino, and other minority-focused media. Neighborhood papers, corporate newsletters, associations, and alumni groups may also provide good access to your target audiences.

And, don’t forget, the NASW Communications Department can help you find local media information and contacts. For more information about this or to receive a local press list, please send an email explaining your needs to media@naswdc.org

Following are some definitions of the items contained in the toolkit, as well as tips on how to use them.

Observance Calendar—*A chart of monthly, weekly, and daily observances that states specific observances created and/or sponsored by national organizations and/or Congress.*

TIPS ON USING THE OBSERVANCE CALENDAR:

- The observances have been broken down into specific practice areas so that you may contact the local chapters of sponsoring organizations to potentially “team” with them for awareness events.
- If there is no sponsor, or if no local chapters can be found for a specific observance, you may wish to organize your own event to highlight social work’s importance in that area of practice.

Media Outreach *Tips*

e-Pitch—Most reporters now prefer to receive pitches by e-mail. It allows them to manage their time more effectively, avoid telephone interruptions, and ponder the idea being presented before responding. These can detail the who, what, when, where and why concerning a news event, story idea or press conference.

Press Release—The most widely used of all public relations formats, press releases are used most often to disseminate information for publicity purposes. They cover any information occurring within an organization that might have some news value to local, regional, or even national media.

TIPS ON DISTRIBUTING E-PITCHES & PRESS RELEASES:

- More and more often, reporters prefer receiving press releases (and pitches, media advisories, etc.) via e-mail. And, most news outlets are including reporters' e-mail addresses on their Web sites or, in the case of newspapers, as part of a reporter's byline. If you can't find an e-mail address, there's nothing wrong with faxing or mailing the materials. Just remember that, in busy newsrooms, faxed materials are frequently disposed of before reporters or editors have a chance to read them. This is why it is important to take a few minutes to try locating the appropriate e-mail address. (Tip: Try calling the news outlet to request an e-mail address if you can't find one on the Web site.)
- Before disseminating, make sure your spokesperson is available to speak to the press the day you send out the news release or e-pitch.
- Don't attach files. Cut and paste your materials in the text of the e-mail. To offer graphics and/or photos, upload these files to your chapter or organization's Web site and include a hot link in your e-mail.
- Please don't call the press to see if they read your news release (or pitches, media advisories, etc.). An appropriate follow-up, which should be limited to one phone call, is "Regarding the information we sent you, do you need additional information?" If there is updated information or "breaking news" regarding your release, offer to supply further materials.
- Always spell check!

Interview Preparation—It's all about being prepared. Remember, the reporter will relay who you are and what you say, as well as any pertinent information about your organization to the public. Therefore, always be prepared.

INTERVIEW PREPARATION TIPS:

- Make the interview conversational. Incorporate the reporter's name into your answers, when appropriate (but don't overdo it, or you'll sound like you're making a sales pitch). For example, "Well, Diane, let me tell you about what we're doing here in New Orleans."
- A reporter may say, "So, tell me about your organization." Be prepared to give a clear and concise description of your chapter or organization in two sentences.
- Forget the old adage, "Off the record." If you don't want the reporter to know about something, don't talk about it.
- Save your best message for last. A good reporter will always ask, "Is there anything else you would like to add?" This is your final chance to make a lasting impression. You may want to discuss something that the reporter didn't cover, or you may want to discuss a trend you see appearing.

Media Outreach *Tips*

- If you don't know an answer to a question, it's acceptable to say, "Can I get back to you with that answer?" Importantly, follow up with the reporter, even if you can't find the answer.

Letters to the Editor (LED)—*Not everyone will agree with an article (column, editorial, opinion piece, etc.). A letter to the editor affords you an opportunity to respond to points made in an article that you strongly agree or disagree with. Additionally, a letter to the editor allows you to highlight an issue the publication is not covering.*

TIPS ON PLACING LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

- Visit the Web site and search for how to submit letters to the editor. Many publications allow you to submit letters via their Web site.
- Keep your letters concise. Always refer to the article to which you're responding, including its title and the date it appeared in print.
- Don't "call out" a reporter. You never know if you'll have to work with this reporter down the road.
- Always spell check!

Op-ed/Bylined Article—*These articles/essays expressing personal views, are usually found in newspapers, opposite the editorial page.*

TIPS ON PLACING OP-ED/BYLINED ARTICLES:

- Make sure your article has an audience. The desired destination of the article must have a readership that would benefit from your article. You can get this information from the publication's Web site. Check the "About Us" section. Or click on the "Advertise With Us" section and look for "Media Kit."
- Some publications don't want to read every article that is submitted. Therefore, prepare an abstract — one to two paragraphs that summarizes the article's intent — for submission. Sometimes, an outline of your article will help, as well.
- Check Web sites for article submission guidelines.
- Always spell check!

Quick Facts — *An information piece that contains just the bulleted facts, nothing more. It should elaborate on already presented information, such as a press release, and not merely repeat what has already been said. These may make good "sidebars"(additional information separated from the main story).*

TIPS ON USAGE FOR QUICK FACTS:

- Quick Facts should always be made available for the press. These are good items to have on hand if reporters ask, "Do you have more information about your organization?"
- When holding an event, or if your spokesperson is making a presentation, have your Quick Facts on hand. You never know when the press will show up.
- Quick Facts should always be included in your press kit. A press kit is a collection of background materials that you can send to media outlets, usually in your organization's folder. Other items to consider putting in the press kit can include the news release and bios of spokespeople or your chapter/organization's president.
- Always spell check!

Media Outreach *Tips*

Live-read Public Service Announcements (15-sec, 30-sec)—A radio or television spot aimed at providing an important message to its target audience. The PSA is reserved for organizations that qualify as nonprofit under federal tax laws.

PSA TIPS:

- 30-second spots are about 65 words.
- Head the spot with the name of the originating organization, its address, and telephone and fax numbers. Include contact information (name, phone, e-mail address).
- Title your spot and give the length at the beginning, not the end.
- For ease of reading, type all radio spots in upper case, double-spaced.
- Talent directions, if any, should be upper and lowercase in parentheses.
- Either mail or hand-deliver the scripts to your local radio stations to the traffic manager or public service director.
- In the script, make sure you include contact information and your Web site URL.

Events/Promotion Ideas — Events and promotion ideas are ways to draw attention to your chapter or organization and/or cause. From a “bake sale” that benefits a battered women’s shelter to a roundtable discussion that explores ways to fight health disparities, the press likes to hear about these events and the causes that drive them.

EVENTS/PROMOTION TIPS:

- Write a news release announcing the event/idea. Include the who, what, when, where and why this is important.
- Write an e-pitch — including the who, what, when, where and why — and disseminate two to three weeks before the event.
- Call the press the day before the event, as a reminder.
- Have a few press kits on hand.
- If partnering with organizations, include bios of key personnel, as well as other relevant materials.

Also please note: If you are planning an event in conjunction with any of these materials, place a press release or media advisory on the “daybooks” and in “week-ahead columns.” Also, call newswire services in your city or state — such as the Associated Press or United Press International — and ask them to place the release on their daybooks the week before, the day before, and the day of the event. Also, try to place the advisory in the “week ahead” or “calendar” section of local newspapers, and business publications that list upcoming events. For more specific information in reaching the media in your community, please contact NASW Communications with a detailed description of your issue at media@naswdc.org

We’re looking for your help in making next year’s toolkit even better. Please visit www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/SWM2004 and fill out our Social Work Month 2004 survey.

II. *Calendar*

| Month | Observance | Sponsor | Related Practice Area |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| January | National Poverty in America Awareness Month | Catholic Campaign for Human Development | Poverty & Social Justice |
| February | Black History Month | Association for the Study of Afro-American Life & History | Diversity & Culture |
| Feb. 2-6 | School Counseling Week | American School Counselors Association | Youth & Schools |
| Feb. 8-14 | National Children of Alcoholics Week | National Association for Children of Alcoholics | Children & Families |
| March | NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH | National Association of Social Workers | SPECIAL: National Professional Social Work Month Package |
| March | Women's History Month | National Organization for Women, National Women's History Project | Diversity & Culture |
| Mar. 29-Apr. 2 | National Youth Violence Prevention Week | Constitutional Rights Foundation-Chicago, American School Counselor Association, Association for Conflict Resolution, National Association of School Resource Officers, Youth Services America | Youth & Schools |
| April | National Child Abuse Prevention Month | National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse & Neglect Information | Children & Families |
| April | Alcohol Awareness Month | National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence, Inc. | Mental Health |
| April | Counseling Awareness Month | American Counseling Association | Children & Families |
| Apr. 5-11 | National Public Health Week | American Public Health Association | Health |
| Apr. 7 | World Health Day | The World Health Organization | Health |
| Apr. 11-17 | National Minority Cancer Awareness Week | Centers for Disease Control National Cancer Institute | Health |
| May | National Foster Care Month | National Association of Social Workers, National Foster Parent Association, the Child Welfare League of America, the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children & Families, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, the National Foster Care Coalition, National CASA, and Casey Family Programs National Center for Resource Family Support | Children & Families |
| May | National Mental Health Month | National Mental Health Association and National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare | Mental Health |
| May | Older Americans Month | Administration on Aging | Aging |
| May | Asian Pacific American Month | Asian Pacific American Heritage Assoc. | Diversity & Culture |

Calendar

| Month | Observance | Sponsor | Related Practice Area |
|------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| May 9-15 | National Nursing Home Week | American Health Care Association | Aging |
| May 1 | National Anxiety Disorders Screening Day | Screening for Mental Health, Inc. | Mental Health |
| May 2-8 | National Suicide Awareness Week | American Association of Suicidology | Mental Health |
| June 6 | National Cancer Survivors Day | National Cancer Institute | Health |
| June 9 | Abused Women and Children's Awareness Day | SAMHSA Center for Mental Health Services | Children & Families |
| July 26 | Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act | Young Adult Institute (YAI)/ National Institute for People with Disabilities | International Human Rights |
| September | Healthy Aging Month | Educational Television Network, Inc. | Aging |
| September | National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month | Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) | Mental Health |
| September | National Hispanic Heritage Month | Hispanic American Leadership Organization | Diversity & Culture |
| October | Child Health Month | American Academy of Pediatrics | Children & Families |
| October | National Depression Education and Awareness Month | National Mental Health Association and Screening for Mental Health, Inc. | Mental Health |
| October | National Domestic Violence Awareness Month | National Coalition Against Domestic Violence | Children & Families |
| October | Hunger Awareness Month | America's Second Harvest | Poverty & Social Justice |
| November | Child Safety and Protection Month | Possible Partner: The National SAFE KIDS Campaign | Children & Families |
| November | Home Care Month | National Association for Home Care and Hospice | Aging |
| November | National Hospice Month | National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization | Health |
| November | Homeless Awareness Month | National Coalition for the Homeless | Poverty & Social Justice |
| November | National Alzheimer's Disease Month | Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association | Aging |
| November | American Indian & Alaska Native Heritage Month | American Indian Culture Research Center, Bureau of Indian Affairs | Diversity & Culture |
| December | Universal Human Rights Month | International Society of Friendship and Goodwill | International Human Rights |
| Dec. 1 | World AIDS Day | American Association for World Health | Health |

III. *Special
National
Professional
Social Work
Month
Package*

e-Pitch

E-PITCH

Subject Line: Saluting (Name of Chapter or Organization’s) Social Workers During National Social Work Month

Since 1984, March has officially been designated as a month to acknowledge and recognize the contributions to the quality of life made by America’s half-million social workers. Often working behind the scenes, social workers are trained to address problems that some can’t or others hope will simply go away.

According to government health statistics, 60 percent of the nation’s mental health services are delivered by social workers. Trained social workers provide more than 40 percent of disaster-related mental health services for the American Red Cross. They work on behalf of children, families, and communities—all those in need of basic services, everyday.

If you would like to know more about the power of social work right here in (community name), I’d be happy to arrange an interview with (name/title of chapter or organization spokesperson) so that your and your audience may learn more about social workers’ commitment to positive change in our community.

Please contact me at (phone) or via e-mail at (e-mail address). Thanks for your time and consideration.

Regards,

(Name, chapter or organization name, title)

###

(Local Chapter or Organization Boilerplate)

Note: A boilerplate is a short paragraph that best summarizes the “who” and “what” of your chapter or organization. The paragraph should remain constant throughout all e-pitches or press releases. See example below.

About the National Association of Social Workers

Founded in 1955, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world, with more than 150,000 members. NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain standards for the profession, and to advance sound social policies. NASW also contributes to the well-being of individuals, families, and communities through its work and advocacy.

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Insert press contact/spokesperson's name)

(Insert contact phone)

(Insert contact e-mail address)

(INSERT LOCAL CHAPTER OR ORGANIZATION NAME), NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS (NASW) KICKOFF NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH 2004

Campaign to Help the Public Better Understand Social Work, How it Supports Individuals & Families, and How the Results Benefit Everyone

[Insert city] — (March 1, 2004) — (Insert local chapter or organization name) — in conjunction with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) — proudly announced today the kickoff of National Social Work Month 2004.

The theme of this year's campaign — "The Power of Social Work: Pass It On" — is intended to help the general public better understand the profession of social work, how it provides for individuals who need help, and how this process benefits everyone in society.

In (name of local community), (name of chapter or organization) and its (number) of social workers are actively involved in helping individuals with their various needs in areas such health, mental health, diversity and culture, international human rights, youth and schools, aging, children and families, and poverty and social justice.

[OPTIONAL SECTION]

To honor the achievements of its members and bring to light the issues faced by social workers, (name of local chapter or organization) is celebrating National Social Work Month by:

- 1-3 BULLETS MENTIONING SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES/EVENTS PLANNED IN YOUR AREA TO CELEBRATE SOCIAL WORK MONTH.

According to (name, title) of (local chapter or organization), social workers tackle some of America's most difficult problems through training and dedication. "Drug addiction, family violence, joblessness, homelessness, mental illness, prejudice and many other conditions affect millions of people with no voice and few options. Social workers help open doors of access and opportunity to those in greatest need."

(Insert local chapter or organization name) and NASW believe all people should have access to healthcare, basic education and the opportunity to earn a fair wage. Implementing these core beliefs requires a solid foundation in both human behavior and in understanding how "the system" works. Social workers actively advocate changes in policy and legislation to strengthen the social safety nets that make a critical difference to so many.

Press Release

Roughly 600,000 social workers are dedicated to ensuring that people of all ages, creeds, sexual orientations, and nationalities have access to adequate resources and services. Their efforts often make all the difference to individuals and families who might otherwise fall through the cracks into hopelessness and despair. Success is measured by helping people achieve their goals on their own terms.

“In schools, hospitals, clinics and community action programs, social workers have made — and continue to make — the world a better place, one person, one family, one challenge at a time,” said Gary Bailey, MSW, president of NASW. “It is fitting that residents of (Insert local community) and all Americans pay tribute to the skills and determination of social workers in America.”

For more information on how (name of local chapter or organization) is supporting (name of month/week/date), please contact (name) at (phone number) or via e-mail at (e-mail address). Or visit our Web site at: (Insert URL)

###

(Local Chapter or Organization Boilerplate)

Note: A boilerplate is a short paragraph that best summarizes the “who” and “what” of your chapter or organization. The paragraph should remain constant throughout all e-pitches or press releases. See example below.

About the National Association of Social Workers

Founded in 1955, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world, with more than 150,000 members. NASW works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain standards for the profession, and to advance sound social policies. NASW also contributes to the well-being of individuals, families, and communities through its work and advocacy.

Letter to the *Editor*

Dear Editor:

March is National Professional Social Work Month, and I'd like to tell you and your readers more about how the social work profession is playing a vital role in our local community.

Professional social workers make a meaningful and humanitarian contribution to (insert local community name) and in communities the world over. The theme of this year's campaign — "The Power of Social Work: Pass It On" — is intended to help the general public better understand the profession of social work, how it provides for individuals who need help, and how this process benefits everyone in society.

Through training and dedication, social workers tackle some of America's most difficult problems: drug addiction, family violence, joblessness, homelessness, mental illness, prejudice and many other conditions that have an impact on millions of people with no voice and few options. Social workers help open doors of access and opportunity to those in greatest need.

Roughly 600,000 social workers are dedicated to ensuring that people of all ages, creeds, sexual orientation, and nationalities have access to adequate resources and services. Their efforts often make all the difference to individuals and families who might otherwise fall through the cracks into hopelessness and despair. Success is measured by helping people achieve their goals on their own terms.

In schools, hospitals, clinics and community action programs in and around (local community name), social workers have made — and continue to make — the world a better place, one person, one family, one challenge at a time.

It is fitting that all Americans pay tribute to the skills and determination of social workers during this time.

Signed,
(Insert Name)
(Insert Title)
(Insert Chapter or Organization Name)
(Insert phone number)
(Insert e-mail address)

General *Op-Ed Piece*

THE POWER OF SOCIAL WORK: PASS IT ON

By (Name, title, chapter or organization name)

Social work isn't one of the most glamorous jobs. The hours are tough, the challenges are even tougher, and it's no secret that the job stress can be high. As a profession, it requires devotion to making a difference for those who are truly in need in (local community) and around the world.

Every day, over a half million social workers wake up believing they will give a child, a family or a senior citizen renewed hope. Social workers help people who don't know where to go to get the treatments and services they need. They strengthen communities, expand options for those who are disadvantaged and oppressed, and work to facilitate humane changes in policies and legislation that improve the lives of everyone.

March was officially designated National Professional Social Work Month by The White House in 1984. And each March, (local chapter or organization name) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) recognize the heart-felt efforts and hard work of America's dedicated social workers.

[OPTIONAL SECTION]

One example of this dedication is (member name) who works in (city, county or organization like hospice, hospital or school). Recently, (name) _____(add accomplishment)_____.

Gary Bailey, MSW, president of NASW, applauds the determination required to fight for all Americans. He acknowledges that a primary goal of social work is protecting people's rights and enabling those in greatest need to achieve success on their own terms.

"The power of social work resides in its professionals," Bailey said. "It is something we must pass on, both to those who are in need of social workers, and to those who may be interested in joining our ranks."

Social workers are often involved in the issues too many of us wish would simply go away. They help troubled students find motivation to succeed. They provide care for the mentally disabled. They intervene in domestic violence, victims' rights, women's rights, prejudice, and many other situations that require a keen sense of people, their motivations, and the conditions that shape their lives.

Social workers are trained and dedicated to making America and the world more humane. Social work often isn't one of those jobs with golden parachutes and lavish stock options. But the job of enhancing the quality of life for people who have the most to lose does pay dividends for everyone.

Quick *Facts*

Did You Know???

Professional social workers aim to build and maintain social conditions that help individuals, groups, and communities to function and succeed on their own terms. The practice requires in-depth, firsthand knowledge of human behavior, insight into social, economic, and cultural issues, and the ability to create a web of security that benefits those in need.

Here are three fast facts about the social work profession that you may not have known:

1. Social workers are highly trained professionals. It takes a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral social work degree—with a minimum number of hours in supervised fieldwork—to become a professional social worker.
2. Social workers are on the front lines helping people overcome life's most difficult challenges—poverty, abuse, addiction, illness, disability, discrimination and more.
3. You'll find social workers in every facet of community life—in schools, hospitals, mental health clinics, senior centers, family crisis centers, military facilities and many public and private agencies—dedicated to helping families and individuals in need.

Social Work By the Numbers

Though the profession has been around for more than a hundred years, social work is one of the most vital — and misunderstood — professional careers in the world today. To see how much of an impact social workers actually have on today's society, it's interesting to look at the numbers:

- Professional social workers are the nation's largest providers of mental health services. According to government sources, 60 percent of mental health treatment is delivered by social workers.
- The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics shows social work is one of the nation's fastest growing careers. The need for social work services is expected to increase by 30 percent by 2010. Currently, nearly 600,000 people hold degrees in social work.
- More than 170 social workers have been elected to national, state, and local political offices.
- More than 40 percent of mental health volunteers trained by the Red Cross for mental health support are social workers.
- NASW is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world with more than 150,000 members.

"THE POWER OF SOCIAL WORK": 15 SECOND SPOT

(Local Chapter or Organization Name)

(Local Chapter or Organization Address)

(Local Chapter or Organization City, State, ZIP)

(Local Chapter or Organization Contact — Name, Phone, Fax, e-mail)

(Announcer): HERE'S A JOB FOR YOU. REACH OUT TO PEOPLE IN NEED AND MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE ONE LIFE, ONE FAMILY, ONE COMMUNITY AT A TIME. IMPOSSIBLE? NOT IF YOU'RE A SOCIAL WORKER. VISIT SOCIAL-WORKERS-DOT-ORG. THE POWER OF SOCIAL WORK: PASS IT ON.

"THE POWER OF SOCIAL WORK": 30 SECOND SPOT

(Local Chapter or Organization Name)

(Local Chapter or Organization Address)

(Local Chapter or Organization City, State, ZIP)

(Local Chapter or Organization Contact — Name, Phone, Fax, e-mail)

(Announcer): HELP A TEENAGER GET OFF DRUGS, THE ELDERLY GET FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, A MOTHER FIND CHILDCARE, AND THOSE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS GET TREATMENT. TOUGH DAY AT THE OFFICE? NOT FOR SOCIAL WORKERS. HELP OTHERS UNDERSTAND THE POWER OF SOCIAL WORK. CALL (NUMBER) OR VISIT SOCIAL-WORKERS-DOT-ORG TO SEE HOW WE RAISE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR EVERYONE. THE POWER OF SOCIAL WORK: PASS IT ON.

Events & *Promotions*

(NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH)

This toolkit is designed to help you get your messages out to the community. How? Here are some ideas that may help your chapter or organization communicate your presence and dedication through special events or promotions:

- Partner with the local affiliates of the organizations during the special observance months/weeks/days provided in the observance calendar section of this toolkit.
- Organize presentations to schools, libraries, churches, synagogues, and mosques. They will help get the word out for you.
- Make plans to attend related conferences in your area and ask permission to distribute social work materials.
- Distribute your existing brochures and pamphlets at hospitals, school guidance offices, employment offices, and related health clinics.
- Actively “talk up” Social Work Month. Make a banner or flyer for your office. Incorporate “The Power of Social Work: Pass It On” in all communications, including e-mails, faxes and memos.

WEB SITE TO DO LIST (NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH)

- Add or update notable social workers or social work programs in your community. Include photos (color) whenever possible.
- Link your organization’s site to the NASW National site: www.socialworkers.org
- Create new content, such as press releases and other materials referenced in this toolkit.
- Link your site with partner organizations in your community. Ask hospitals, schools, social service clinics, and others to link to your site as well.
- Acknowledge reporters who have positively covered your chapter or organization. Ask their publications’ permission to put stories on your site or reprint them as handouts.

IV. *Packaged Practice Areas*

Health

POTENTIAL OBSERVANCES

| Month | Observance | Sponsor |
|------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Apr. 5-11 | National Public Health Week | American Public Health Association |
| Apr. 7 | World Health Day | The World Health Organization |
| June 6 | National Cancer Survivors Day | National Cancer Institute |
| November | National Hospice Month | National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization |
| Dec. 1 | World AIDS Day | American Association for World Health |

Letter to the Editor (mental health)

Dear Editor:

(Insert month/week/date) is (observation) and I'd like to tell you more about the social work profession and its role in providing health care to our local community. We are dedicated to the health and well-being of people and communities on the front lines and in the background of policy making. Social workers today comprise a critical component of health care delivery.

We're actively and passionately involved in medical and psychiatric services, community health and mental health clinics, alcohol and substance abuse programs, school health clinics, home care agencies, nursing homes, and hospice centers.

Social workers are dedicated to delivering quality and comprehensive care to patients and families, which puts them in a unique position to monitor and assess the impact of legislation and funding for critical health care programs.

As a group of more than 600,000 concerned caregivers, social workers believe all Americans should have access to affordable, quality health care. Social workers everywhere are concerned with the rising costs of health coverage and increasing limits on access to services. Current trends create serious problems for the elderly, low-income families, and the growing ranks of uninsured citizens.

The National Association of Social Workers describes the purpose of social work in health care as:

- Assisting individuals, families, and significant partners adapt to illness, disease or disability in a way that can lead to profound changes in their emotional or social well-being;
- Preventing social and emotional problems from interfering with physical and mental health, or with needed treatment; and,
- Identifying gaps in community services and working with community-based organizations to provide necessary supports.

The month of (Insert) will find social workers advocating for policies that are humane, fair, and above all beneficial to the citizens of (Insert State).

Signed,
(Insert Name)
(Insert Title)
(Insert Chapter or Organization Name)
(Insert phone number)
(Insert e-mail address)

For a template e-pitch and press release written on health, please visit www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/SWM2004

Mental *Health*

POTENTIAL OBSERVANCES

| Month | Observance | Sponsor |
|------------------|--|--|
| April | Alcohol Awareness Month | National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. |
| May | National Mental Health Month | National Mental Health Association and National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare |
| May 1 | National Anxiety Disorders Screening Day | Screening for Mental Health, Inc. |
| May 2-8 | National Suicide Awareness Week | American Association of Suicidology |
| September | National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month | Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) |
| October | National Depression Education and Awareness Month | National Mental Health Association and Screening for Mental Health, Inc. |

Letter to the Editor (mental health)

Dear Editor:

(Insert month/week/date) is (observation) and I'd like to tell you more about the social work profession and its role in providing mental health support services to our community.

Nearly 40 percent of the nation's 600,000 social workers are mental health specialists. In many rural areas, social workers are the sole providers of critical mental health services. The job of ensuring that those with disorders receive the most effective and least restrictive treatment available requires a "big picture" view of causes, effects, and options.

Social workers see the whole person, as part of a family, as an employee of a company, as a community member. They bring special skills to the treatment of root causes that negatively affect people. This "total person" approach means providing specific therapies, navigating fragmented support systems and coordinating a continuum of care that extends from prevention to recovery.

Social workers help clients adjust to major life traumas like the loss of a loved one, disability, divorce or job loss. They're active in substance abuse treatments and helping those with depression, anxiety, or other personal crises including disasters.

Mental Health

You will find social workers involved in variety of settings, including:

- Community mental health programs
- Military and veteran services
- Hospitals and skilled nursing facilities
- Schools
- Rehabilitation programs
- Disaster relief efforts
- Employee assistance programs

Children, adolescents, adults, and older individuals benefit from the dedication of social workers. It is our belief that mental health treatments should be provided in parity with treatments for other diseases, and should be included in all health care plans.

Signed,
(Insert Name)
(Insert Title)
(Insert Chapter or Organization Name)
(Insert phone number)
(Insert e-mail address)

For a template e-pitch and press release written on mental health, please visit www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/SWM2004

Diversity & *Culture*

POTENTIAL OBSERVANCES

| Month | Observance | Sponsor |
|------------------|--|---|
| February | Black History Month | Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History |
| March | Women's History Month | National Organization for Women, National Women's History Project |
| May | Asian Pacific American Month | Asian Pacific American Heritage Assoc. |
| September | National Hispanic Heritage Month | Hispanic American Leadership Organization |
| November | American Indian & Alaska Native Heritage Month | American Indian Culture Research Center, Bureau of Indian Affairs |

Letter to the Editor (diversity & culture)

Dear Editor,

During (month, week, date) and all year long, the (insert local chapter or organization name) demonstrates social workers are among the best equipped to help people from all backgrounds lead connected, healthy and productive lives in America.

According to the 2000 Census, 25 percent of people living in America report being members of ethnic or racial groups. Cultural competence is the process of respectfully and effectively working with people of all cultures, classes, races, religions, and ethnic backgrounds. Social workers have a long history of understanding people's differences and the impact of social injustice on their well-being.

Many social workers have real knowledge and understanding of the history, values, family structures and personal expressions of diverse clients. Compassionate intervention can make the difference between someone "making it" and "falling through the cracks." By recognizing and affirming the values and worth of diverse individuals, social workers can offer goal-oriented treatments and services that would be otherwise unavailable for many.

In light of the accelerating demographic shifts in America, social workers strive to:

- Value diversity;
- Develop the capacity for cultural self-assessment;
- Recognize the dynamics of cultural interactions; and
- Offer solutions that take those diverse interactions into consideration.

The National Association of Social Workers and its (chapter or organization name) are instrumental in developing standards for delivering culturally diverse services to an increasingly diverse clientele that calls America home.

Signed,
(Insert Name)
(Insert Title)
(Insert Chapter or Organization Name)
(Insert phone number)
(Insert e-mail address)

For a template e-pitch and press release written on diversity and culture, please visit www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/SWM2004

International *Human Rights*

POTENTIAL OBSERVANCES

| Month | Observance | Sponsor |
|----------|--|--|
| July 26 | Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act | Young Adult Institute (YAI)/ International Human Rights National Institute for People with Disabilities |
| December | Universal Human Rights Month | International Society of Friendship and Goodwill |

Letter to the Editor (international human rights)

Dear Editor,

The (insert local chapter or organization name) is representative of 600,000 social workers in America committed to fighting for just and humane societies. Social workers believe that the installation of human rights, internationally, nationally and locally, is fundamental to the very survival of the human race.

With human rights violations pandemic in the world today, social workers are at the forefront of an epic struggle to ensure that all people have access to food, shelter, clean water, and health care. Both natural and man-made disasters are proof that the world is one community, even affecting those locally. Over the years, our collective problems and destinies have become increasingly interconnected.

Social workers help put United Nations treaties, declarations and conventions on human rights into practice the world over. Through determination, special skills, and flexible problem solving, social workers help foster human hope and potential in places where oppression and despair have long ruled.

International social work efforts are applied on many fronts, including:

- Counseling and aiding refugees;
- Facilitating international adoptions;
- Providing disaster relief in times of crisis;
- Developing, managing and staffing service-delivery programs with the Red Cross and other agencies; and
- Reporting on international issues with a focus on improving the quality of life and addressing social injustices.

Working as program developers, managers and staff, social workers are in the front lines of the U.N. High Commission for Refugees, whose aim is the protection of refugees in all phases of transit and resettlement. Support is also provided to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) that deals with all facets of health care, abuse, and emergency relief for women and children. These and other social programs are considered among the U.N.'s greatest humanitarian efforts.

Signed,

(Insert Name)

(Insert Title)

(Insert Chapter or Organization Name)

(Insert phone number)

(Insert e-mail address)

For a template e-pitch and press release written on international human rights, please visit www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/SWM2004

Youth & *Schools*

POTENTIAL OBSERVANCES

| Month | Observance | Sponsor |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Feb. 2-6 | School Counseling Week | American School Counselors Association |
| Mar. 29- Apr. 2 | National Youth Violence Prevention Week | Constitutional Rights Foundation Youth & Schools-Chicago, American School Counselor Association, Association for Conflict Resolution, National Association of School Resource Officers, Youth Services America |

Letter to the Editor (youth & schools)

Dear Editor,

The (insert local chapter or organization name) is actively involved in addressing the complicated problems that beset many of our local students today, especially during (month/week/date). Many of these are root problems of poor academic performance. Hunger, sickness, abuse, and a number of other factors prey heavily on young people with limited resources and options.

In addition to providing traditional academic support, social workers employ expertise in human behavior, mental health issues, relationships, and interventions. They work to connect students, families, and communities to resources that foster personal achievement and success.

Through counseling, crisis intervention and prevention programs, social workers are on the front lines developing innovative solutions to difficult issues. They create an important bridge between schools, families, and the community to help young people overcome hardships and give them a better chance of succeeding in school.

Social workers in (community name) offer support for struggling parents and facilitate staff meetings designed to encourage school change. Like many Americans, social workers are especially concerned about problems confronting today's youths including drug use, teen pregnancy, STDs, suicide, violence, poverty, and abuse. Social workers also help homeless youth, gay and lesbian students, as well as students with physical or mental disabilities.

School social workers provide a range of services including:

- Assessing and diagnosing students for special education programs;
- Individual counseling for students with mental health difficulties;
- Contacting overburdened parents; and
- Meeting with teachers and school support personnel.

Through innovative solutions to complex problems, school social workers are working each day to help our students achieve their dreams for the future.

Signed,

(Insert Name)

(Insert Title)

(Insert Chapter or Organization Name)

(Insert phone number)

(Insert e-mail address)

For a template e-pitch and press release written on youth and schools, please visit www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/SWM2004

Aging

POTENTIAL OBSERVANCES

| Month | Observance | Sponsor |
|-----------|------------------------------------|---|
| May | Older Americans Month | Administration on Aging |
| May 9-15 | National Nursing Home Week | American Health Care Association |
| September | Healthy Aging Month | Educational Television Network, Inc. |
| November | Home Care Month | National Association for Home Care and Hospice |
| November | National Alzheimer's Disease Month | Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association |

Letter to the Editor (aging)

Dear Editor:

(Insert Month) is (observation) and I'd like to tell you how social workers in (community name) are assisting our older adults with the health-related services they require. Through individual and family counseling, psychosocial assessment, and coordinating care, social workers provide a range of services to fill critical gaps in long-term care.

The "Graying of America" and lengthening life spans put new pressures on individuals and their families. Gerontological social workers have specialized knowledge and expertise to address these pressures. Clients may require diagnostic, preventive, rehabilitative, and personal care services. Social workers help provide the best possible care from all alternatives, including professional caregivers and informal caregivers such as family and friends.

Social workers strive to promote independence, autonomy, and dignity for their clients. They offer families ways to deal effectively with long-term care responsibilities and work through hospitals, nursing homes, hospices, independent and assisted-living facilities, public agencies, and even in client homes.

Social workers help families cope with the stresses of placing loved ones in nursing homes and assisted living communities. They refer family members to support groups and encourage them to participate in care plan meetings. Social workers understand that the best elder care requires a broad view of social, environmental, psychological, economic, and health care options. As more and more older Americans face the challenge of limited mobility, social workers intervene in ways that are non-constraining to ensure appropriate care and services are received.

Signed,
(Insert Name)
(Insert Title)
(Insert Chapter or Organization Name)
(Insert phone number)
(Insert e-mail address)

For a template e-pitch and press release written on aging, please visit www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/SWM2004

Children & *Families*

POTENTIAL OBSERVANCES

| Month | Observance | Sponsor |
|------------------|--|--|
| Feb. 8-14 | National Children of Alcoholics Week | National Association for Children of Alcoholics |
| April | National Child Abuse Prevention Month | National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information |
| April | Counseling Awareness Month | American Counseling Association |
| May | National Foster Care Month | National Association of Social Workers, National Foster Parent Association, the Child Welfare League of America, the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the National Foster Care Coalition, National CASA, and Casey Family Programs National Center for Resource Family Support |
| June 9 | Abused Women and Children's Awareness Day | SAMHSA Center for Mental Health Services |
| October | Child Health Month | American Academy of Pediatrics |
| October | National Domestic Violence Awareness Month | National Coalition Against Domestic Violence |
| November | Child Safety and Protection Month | Possible Partner: The National SAFE KIDS Campaign |

Letter to the Editor (children & families)

Dear Editor:

(Insert Month) is (observation) and I'd like to tell you more about how (community name) social workers are providing a wide range of supports and services for local families of all sizes and descriptions.

In today's society, family does not always mean the traditional model of married parents with biological offspring. In fact, less than half of America's children live in a traditional "nuclear" family. Divorced, separated, or unmarried parents who have individual or shared responsibility for children now factor into the family definition. So do grandparents caring for grandchildren, gay and lesbian couples with child responsibilities, and adoptive and foster parents. All these American family types come with special strengths, needs, and challenges.

Social workers define "family" as two or more people who assume obligations and responsibilities generally conducive to family life. As such, all families deserve support systems that include access to economic resources, health care, employment, education, housing, and social services.

Children & Families

Poverty, homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction, abuse, and neglect are key factors for families splitting apart. Social workers are equipped to help families cope with stresses of life and deal with problems associated with these situations. They work through support systems, counseling, coordinating resources, and advocating for clients.

Supporting families involves many functions, including:

- Counseling families to find working solutions to problems;
- Placing abused children in nurturing homes;
- Helping to find employment and housing for homeless families;
- Helping pregnant women, adoptive parents and adopted children through states' adoption systems;
- Helping those in need make best use of the public welfare system; and
- Aiding women and their children who are victims of domestic violence.

Making the new American family stronger takes a family-centered approach along with a clear view of social problems and the many ways to address them. Social workers are there to help.

Signed,
(Insert Name)
(Insert Title)
(Insert Chapter or Organization Name)
(Insert phone number)
(Insert e-mail address)

For a template e-pitch and press release written on children and families, please visit www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/SWM2004

Poverty & *Social Justice*

POTENTIAL OBSERVANCES

| Month | Observance | Sponsor |
|----------|---|---|
| January | National Poverty in America Awareness Month | Catholic Campaign for Human Development |
| October | Hunger Awareness Month | America's Second Harvest |
| November | Homeless Awareness Month | National Coalition for the Homeless |

Letter to the Editor (poverty & social justice)

Dear Editor:

(Insert Month) is (observation) and I'd like to tell you more about the social work profession and its role in protecting (community name's) women, children, the elderly and other vulnerable citizens from the perilous spiral of poverty. The consequences of unemployment and underemployment also can lead to devastating social and health problems. To alleviate these problems takes a well-orchestrated effort.

Social workers in (community name) support local policies that narrow the ever widening gap between rich and poor. By focusing on the individual and community levels, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) actively fights poverty on a national level. As a consolidated voice, social workers urge political action on raising the minimum wage, extending health care coverage, and many other issues crucial to ending poverty, aside from simply working to reduce the number of welfare recipients.

In addressing the issues of poverty, social workers help spearhead efforts to enhance human well-being by working with poor communities to organize and utilize their assets and combine them with additional resources to strengthen health care, education and financial support systems.

Many people living in poverty, especially single mothers with children, need access to day care, affordable housing, mental health treatment, educational and employment opportunities. Social workers are adept at guiding those in need to the services they require to climb the ladder of opportunity to economic self-sufficiency.

Social workers use their training to advocate the principles of social justice and look beyond the symptoms of poverty to get at the root of solving this worldwide and local problem. It's a requisite for helping people to become vital, contributing members of society.

Signed,
(Insert Name)
(Insert Title)
(Insert Chapter or Organization Name)
(Insert phone number)
(Insert e-mail address)

For a template e-pitch and press release written on poverty and social justice, please visit www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/SWM2004

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