



Individuals and communities
transformed through human services

LINK

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THE NOHS BOARD

‘GETTING ACTIVE!’

BE MORE THAN JUST
A MEMBER.

BECOME A PART OF
NOHS.

President's Message

Tammi Dice

Hello and Happy Warm Weather Days (or at least that's the case in the South!))! I am very pleased to reach out to you as the new President of NOHS and a proud member of SOHS. I am also an Associate Professor of Counseling and Human Services and Human Services Program Director at Old Dominion University in Virginia. I'd like to use this opportunity to share with you the vision for the future of the National Organization of Human Services. I shared much of this at various regional conferences this spring, but I wanted to make sure all members had an opportunity to receive this message...

Most of you are aware that NOHS has experienced great challenges over the last couple of years. We no longer have the services of an association management company and are in the process of restructuring, reorganizing and rebuilding. At the National Conference this past October, the Board worked hard to devise a plan for moving forward. We are in the beginning stages of that process now, but already, some important advancements have been made.

We elected several new Board Members, some of whom have not served on the Board previously and are excited and motivated to learn about the organization and its regions, and dive in to work! Those who continue to serve on the Board or are serving in a new capacity are also hopeful for the future and prepared to do what it takes to move ahead. This is quite challenging, as the Board members must take on all of the roles that the AM handled previously. There is a learning curve for this, but our team is willing and able to handle it, although patience as we all adapt is begged.

We've also hired a web manager who has been redeveloping our website. This was sorely needed as it has been difficult to navigate and appeared outdated. Steve Wood has been supremely responsive and working tirelessly to prepare the new site. We are very glad to announce its opening. Even so, changes will need to be made, as web site maintenance is an on-going process. As launched, we welcome your feedback! I have to express our gratitude for Steve because he has been doing far more than just web development - he sends all of the email blasts, posts announcements on the site as requested, and has been managing our payment processing system, which is quite the challenge.

Another important addition to our team is a Bookkeeper who may be the most essential operative for our moving forward. Mark Reh fuss, the new Treasurer has been working with an interim bookkeeper who was willing to establish our finances on the online Quickbooks system, develop a weekly reporting process, and systematize everything by organization, including the associated regions and TUA. She and Mark have worked hard to establish this system and we are confident that the permanent hire will be able to transition smoothly into the position.

Another major focus moving forward is *member services*. It has been endlessly frustrating to become a member of NOHS and receive no follow-up correspondence. This is unacceptable. To start, we have made access to Board Members easier by listing everyone on the website and including emails for each. If you have a question about your membership payment or status, our Membership Chair, Shawn Ricks can be contacted. If you want info about CEU's, you can email the VP of Professional Development, Rikkisha Gilmore-Byrd. If you need to know something about the national conference, Geneva Flemming is accessible; TUA? - Laurie Weiner can be emailed. Essentially, you will now be able to get your questions answered by going straight to the source.

Additionally, new Membership Chair, Shawn Ricks, is working with Steve Wood to develop a system so that new members and renewing members are contacted automatically after submission of payment through Memberclicks with an email and electronic certificate. We hope to include a brief survey in this correspondence to inquire about your expectations as a NOHS member and solicit your service. Shawn is also working to update the member directory, as it seems many members are not logged in the system, and thus are left out of correspondence. These efforts are major undertakings so they will take time, but please know that change is happening! In the meantime, I hope you have enjoyed my emails and FB posts as well as those from your Regional Leaders.

Among all of the Board members, there are exciting things happening. For example, there are currently no manuals for Board member roles. With our New Secretary, Darlene Rodriguez leading the charge, each member is developing and compiling information about their role, specifying the role's purpose, responsibilities, tasks, resources needed to accomplish tasks, and relevant timelines. Ultimately, the goal is to develop manuals from this information to ease the transition into roles for future Board members.

Geneva Fleming has been VERY busy planning the next NOHS Conference to be held in Des Moines, Iowa! We haven't had a conference in the Midwestern region in some time, so we are excited to draw folks to the middle of our great country. There will be dynamic presentations from presenters representing every region, and Dr. Fleming is adding a delightful gala for attendees to dance the night away... The new VP of Professional Development, Rikkisha Gilmore-Byrd will assure that CEU's are available and our new VP of Public Relations and Marketing, Tara Garrison is working to recruit vendors, sponsors, exhibitors, and publishing companies to attend as well. We certainly hope to see you there! The VP of Professional Development, Rikkisha Gilmore-Byrd is also very interested in exploring the possibility of online workshops for CEU's. This was discussed in years past and we are hoping to bring it to fruition now. This would be a wonderful additional perk to NOHS membership.

Additionally, both the Ethics Chair, Nancy Wood, and the Advocacy Chair, Diane Berry plan to bring relevant advocacy issues and ethics topics to light through email blasts, FB posts, and publications in this NOHS Newsletter, The Link. Each Board member is contributing to the Link so be sure to continue reading this very valuable publication for information about upcoming events, resources, and contemporary issues in human services. We continue to be ever so grateful to Steve Cockerham for his editorship of this publication.

And of course I have to plug our Journal... I stepped down as Co-Editor of the *Journal of Human Services* when taking on the presidency. However, we have a new Co-Editor to work with Ed Neukrug: Kevin Snow. He was a former copy editor and editorial assistant and he is well-published, so he is quite capable of this new position. The Journal comes out annually in October. Please be on the lookout for this valuable member benefit.

NOHS is dedicated to rebuilding and charging ahead. This is important, not just for us as members, but for the entire field of human services. We are still an emerging profession in need of a strong national organization to be the voice for the field, advocate for its viability, stand by its credentialing, support its academic institutions, provide its code of ethics to promote competent practice, and to provide a cohesive identity for human services students, practitioners and educators. The organization is important! Because of efforts by Board members, Narketta Sparkman-Key and Ed Neukrug, the Occupational Outlook Handbook, which is published by the US Department of Labor and utilized for career exploration by individuals everywhere, has contacted us to CHANGE THE TITLE AND DEFINITION of our field from human services assistant to Human Services Professional. This is important for us and our trajectory, and this is the result of efforts at the national level.

I am writing you with a plea... As human services professionals, I ask that you commit to serving this field through serving your regional and national organizations. If you want change, please step in and commit to affecting change. Let's commit to working together for the betterment of our organizations and the betterment of human services.

Enjoy your summer and see you in Iowa!!!

NOHS Board Leadership

ADVOCACY

As you know, STANDARD 16 of our Ethical Standards for Human Service Professionals (2015) requires that "Human Service Professionals advocate for social justice and seek to eliminate oppression. They raise awareness of underserved population in their communities and with the legislative system."

As NOHS Advocacy Chair, I am seeking information from NOHS members about your advocacy. Please send me an email in response to any or all of the following questions:

1. What issues do you find most significant and in need of advocacy?
2. How do you, personally, advocate for social justice? (Please be as specific as possible)
3. With regard to which issues would you like to see NOHS, as an organization, advocating on behalf of the people we serve?
4. What ideas do you have for involvement of NOHS in advocating for social justice?

Thank you for sharing your ideas! Please email responses to: advocacy@nationalhumanservices.org

Diane Berry
NOHS Advocacy Chair

PUBLIC RELATIONS

CALL FOR MEMBERS!

With the upcoming conference in Des Moines, IA in October, we really want to make an impact to those attending by having a massive sponsorship and vendor participation. This is where we need our members! We are currently requesting members to form committees for Fundraising, National Conference and Regional Conference sponsors and vendors!

Don't worry...all experience levels are welcome! If you want to be a part of progressively moving human services forward, please send an email with your name, state, area of interests. I look forward to hearing from our membership!

Please let me know if you have any questions: taragarrison2013@gmail.com

Have a wonderful day!!

Tara Garrison
Vice President for Public Relations

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The regional organizations of the NOHS serve a major function to the overall success and direction of the national organization. The NOHS collaboratively works with five regional organizations to promote the field of Human Services. The role of Vice President of Regional Development is to work with each unique organization as they promote the human services across the country. The VP of Regional Development also works to serve as a conduit between the regions and the national organization. The past few weeks have been spent in conversation with individual leaders to better understand the needs, goals and collaborative expectations between the national organization and each regional entity. Out of these conversations, four main "buckets" were identified as starting points for our future work:

Communication
Transparency
Partnership/Collaboration
Strategic Vision

With conceptual buckets identified, our first goal is to set up a communication pathway to start conversations about our work. We are working to set up bimonthly meetings to set our path forward. We look forward to sharing more in future editions of the LINK!

Paige Krabill, PsyD, LSP, HS-BCP
Vice President for Regional Development
vpregionaldev@nationalhumanservices.org

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

CALL FOR MEMBER PARTICIPATION!

Many National Organizations are now offering online trainings and webinars. We would like to begin offering these periodically throughout the year (at least quarterly) beginning after the Annual, National conference. I am assembling a committee to get this initiative going. The plan is that these trainings would at a minimum fulfill the HS-BCP continuing education requirements, but the committee will explore additional opportunities. I have already gotten a member to agree to chair the committee, so please consider joining us on this initiative to keep NOHS at the forefront of education and training.

The more hands we have on deck, the less of time commitment we will have.

Please contact me with questions and to sign up at RikkishaGilmoreByrd@gmail.com or vpprofessionaldev@nationalhumanservices.org

I look forward to hearing from you!

Rikkisha Gilmore-Byrd, MS, MPH
Vice President for Professional Development and Education

Online Conference Venue Makes a Big Impact on MWOHS Attendees

Linda Wark

The Midwest Organization for Human Services (MWOHS) forged a new path for regional conferences. Using a completely online venue, Dr. Paige Krabill - Conference Coordinator for 2017, brought attendees from the Midwest region to two days of well-coordinated viewing and participation with many presenters. PowerPoint slides were used by presenters who spoke to the cyber-audience. Dr. Krabill took a central role in setting up the technology and training the presenters as well as having a solid presence during the conference time.

Tronda Douglas, a doctoral student at Walden University, was a first time attendee. She stated, "I am new to the profession. The conference exceeded my expectations. I enjoyed the convenience of the online format. The speakers were knowledgeable. Hearing information on how human services play a part in resiliency programs and law enforcement outreach opened my eyes to the diverse roles of the human services field. Starting the conference off with a session on the future of human services, and how to identify, prevent, and address job burnout from a professional instead of a textbook helped me understand the importance of taking care of myself. Providing information on textbook usage options and findings from a study on single African American mothers encouraged me to do more reading. I recommend other human service professionals make an attempt to attend these conferences for professional and personal growth."

Attendees didn't participate as isolated viewers. One feature of the online conference was the ability to "communicate with the presenters through the chat function of the conference room and receive answers to our questions," said Dr. Elaine Barclay of the Considerate Soul Ministries, Inc. In addition, there was no dead air time. Music played between presentations, and informational announcements were made. Dr. Barclay went on to say, "I liked the fact that we were informed of the timeframe between presentations and what to expect." Some technical difficulties arose, and "the conference leadership diligently worked together to overcome the obstacles and kept it moving."

The keynote address, *The Future of Human Services*, was presented by Elaine M. Barclay, PhD, LPC, HS-BCP, NCC. Attendees also heard from student, practitioner, and faculty presenters. There was a wide array of topics that covered everything from direct care, self-care for Human Service Professionals, instructional techniques, special problems in families, innovative ideas around a national volunteer network, and human service textbooks.

The attendees were connected to the NOHS Board through an address by Dr. Tammi Dice, current NOHS President. "Hearing from Tammy was a sheer delight! She provided clear-cut direction for NOHS and the expectations that will come. It was very reassuring to know of the exciting things NOHS is eagerly putting into place and how we are to remember that working together will eventually pay off for those holding the Human Service Board Certified Practitioners certification," said Dr. Barclay. In addition, the MWOHS Board introduced themselves. "I listened to all the presentations scheduled the first day and felt it was a huge success."

Dr. Kristin Faix Wilkinson, President - MWOHS, noted the flexibility of the sessions for attendees interspersed with breaks and information on NOHS events. "One recommendation we received was to have a session at every conference that engaged new professionals to speak about their journey with its challenges, experiences, and accomplishments. Next time, I would love to include highlights of organizations in the field and best practices. Plans for webinars throughout the year are being discussed."

If you want to learn more about the technical aspects of producing an online conference, ask the 2017 NOHS Conference Chair, Dr. Geneva Fleming, to invite Dr. Paige Krabill to present in Des Moines this October! Online conferences may not permanently take the place of brick-and-mortar conferences, but it's good to know that an alternate venue is available!



A National Commission on Voluntary Sector Capacity and Sustainability and the Future of Human Service Management

Tracy D. Connors

Winds of Change: Basis for a rough career voyage for human services professionals, or the empowering energy for needed future management competencies?

In the face of dramatic winds of change buffeting America's voluntary, philanthropic, human service delivery sector, I would like to suggest the need for a National Commission on Voluntary Sector Capacity and Sustainability to collect, generate, and share, the far-reaching data and information we need to make sound decisions regarding the future of human services delivery.

The voluntary sector currently employs over 10% of the nation's workforce, more than the utility, wholesale trade, and construction industries combined. In this presentation at the recent MWOHS conference, as lead and core faculty for the Norwich University MPA Nonprofit Management Certification Program, I pointed out that the "Quality of Life Sector" of over one million charitable, human service organizations is facing enormous change. In the face of dwindling resources, the *winds of change* demand that our organizations and their professionals achieve significant improvements in areas such as mission fulfillment, organizational performance and productivity, and delivery of human services. Overall, our greatest challenge will be to ensure our voluntary sector has the capacity to meet America's future human service needs.

Regulations are changing, federal budgets are changing, and the economy is in a state of flux. Clearly, a national dialogue is underway that is focused on issues and environmental changes that face our public and private sectors. The on-going national dialogue is popularly characterized by the slogan, "Make America Great Again." Yet, so far, that national dialogue has not meaningfully included the voluntary sector, the impact such changes will have on human services delivery, and the implications of these changes on the careers of human services professionals.

The National Commission presentation highlighted the following issues:

- Third Sector, human services organizations must deliver a myriad of human services in the face of ever evolving operating environments, compounded by the ever-growing demands for the myriad of human services ranging from arts and education to health, advocacy, and social services.
- Sustaining our national quality of life in the face of expanding needs and dwindling resources will require significant improvements by our voluntary organizations in mission fulfillment, performance, productivity, and human services delivery. These improvements will require significant expansions in organizational capacity and performance improvement. New approaches and more effective management models focused on change leadership will be required by practitioners and in the sector's enriched professional development programs.
- Voluntary organizations are increasingly challenged by national demands for more program evaluation, more performance measures, more assessment of outcomes and results, and greater use of planning and evaluation to achieve ever-higher levels of effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, and transparency.
- Sustainable, superior performance by charitable organizations is not only expected by the communities they serve but will be essential to their viability over time, particularly in the face of ever-changing operating environments. Future national quality of life, from healthcare and culture to recreation and religion, depends on the extent to which leaders of America's nonprofit organizations can achieve – and sustain – levels of quality and excellence in the future that by today's standards will be considered extraordinary.

Overall, the operating environments in which charitable organizations must survive and provide ever more demanding levels of service and productivity reflect chaotic reconfiguration. Many nonprofits are struggling to adapt existing management, organizational, and program models to fit new and changing conditions and environments. Charitable organizations perceive and report significant pressures from national and environmental sources to improve their overall organizational performance in ways that enable them to be more accountable, effective, efficient, and transparent.

The presenter and the participants recognized and emphasized the importance of the "Quality of Life" sector and the pivotal roles played by human services management professionals. As leaders and managers of human services organizations, they understood the need for sound, far-reaching databased planning to help ensure the current and future capacity of Voluntary Sector human services organizations and the ability of their dedicated professionals and volunteers to deliver the enormous volume and range of human services expected of them.

The challenge for fact-based planning lies in obtaining nonpolitical, nonideological data that will provide voluntary sector leaders with the information and understandings they need to make sound decisions in vital human services delivery areas. These areas certainly include policy, education, professional development, workforce readiness, and overall capacity if our organizations are to meet growing needs.

The data gathered and analyzed by a National Commission on Voluntary Sector Capacity and Sustainability would provide more dependable, fact-based knowledge for sector and organizational planning. An area of particular relevance and importance to session participants focused on the contributions of such a commission to a better understanding of the educational and professional development resources, opportunities, and needs of preparing human services managers to achieve improved organizational performance.

Three fundamental questions for participants:

- As the national association whose mission is the professional advancement and success of human service management professionals, and in the face of these changes to the world of human service delivery, what should we be considering for the future of our HS-BCP credential that will prepare our members for success and professional achievement?
- In addition to the professional advancement benefits provided by the validated competencies included in the HS-BCP, what should be the next steps taken by NOHS to support, foster and recognize career development and achievement by HS professionals as they advance into management and supervisory roles?
- And finally, based on the reality of these national changes and the mission and vision of NOHS, should we consider how to expand professional development opportunities and promote professional identity for HS professionals using a certification process that prepares HS professionals for managerial roles, validates the competencies they need and have acquired, and complements the HS-BCP?

For more information or details, contact: Tracy D. Connors, PhD, HS-BCP, Captain, USN (Ret.)
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Teaching by Design: Using Case Studies and Concept Dissection to Teach Human Services

Michelle L. Hurley

Designing learning activities that will encourage students to do what is in their own best interest can be challenging. We certainly know that it *is* in the interest of students to follow the instructor's directions, complete readings, and make earnest attempts at homework assignments and exams. However, the acts of immersion and digesting the materials can be much more elusive for students. Recently, in an informal survey taken during a class that I teach at my institution, students reported that they do not often complete the readings in *any* course that they take. Reasons cited included the lack of time, lack of concentrated reading skills, and a dislike of reading in general and of content concentrated too heavily on theory and not enough on applicable skills. When traditional pedagogy is inadequate, how do we embolden students to assume accountability for their own learning?

Case studies may provide the answer. The use of case studies to foster learning is certainly not a new concept but continues to be a tool that deserves consideration in human service classrooms. Case studies paint a vibrant picture, articulating nuances that may be lost in other teaching platforms. Students can use case studies to make personal connections with their own experiences, draw inferences, and formulate conclusions based on calculated consideration of the entire holistic picture. Case studies provide the context in which we can discuss theory in a more meaningful manner and animate foundational concepts, involving the student as an active participant rather than a bystander. While case studies can be helpful learning tools in the classroom, it is also helpful to provide students with a framework that assists them in reading these case files carefully and with purpose.

In his compilation of best practices in college teaching, Tom Drummond (North Seattle Community College) provides an example of utilizing writing in conjunction with focused reading to create clarity. In this example, students *dissect* a case or concept by completing the following writing prompts:

- **Description:** What happened? What did you see? What did you hear? What is the difference between...?
- **Reflection:** What was interesting? What was surprising?
- **Analogy:** What else does it remind you of? What else does it look like?
- **Common Purpose:** What is the common purpose of...? What is it usually used for?
- **Procedures:** How does one normally do...? How is this done? What is the logical next step?
- **Possibilities:** What else could...? How could we...? If we didn't have or couldn't use..., what would we...?
- **Prediction:** What will happen next? What will you see? What will be the effect?
- **Justification:** How can you tell? What evidence led you to...?
- **Theorizing:** Why is it that way? What is the reason for it?
- **Generalization:** What is the same about ____ and ____? What could you generalize from these events? What principle is at work?
- **Definition:** What does _____ mean? Define the word _____.
- **Conceptualize:** Using all the information above, construct your own conceptual model of this case/issue.

These writing prompts can inspire the student to read with increased focus as well as develop and refine ideas about case content. Prompts may be used with a pre-class reading assignment or done collectively in the classroom. Interestingly, students are not prompted for a definition of the concept until the latter part of the assignment. This enables students to think about the case or concept without the initial limitations of a finite definition – critical when we are encouraging analysis. In some cases, the student may not be able to formulate an answer to each question or complete a prompt. Perhaps the case does not lend itself. In those instances, it is worthwhile to have a conversation about why that is and how the case could be conceptualized outside the parameters of these prompts.

The use of case files in human service courses is not revolutionary; however, they are invaluable teaching tools that demand students use critical thinking skills when paired with writing prompts. By expecting students to dissect the case critically, we are creating opportunities for them to practice skill sets that reflect the job market in which they will soon enter and foster attributes that enable the recognition of multiple perspectives.

Case Study

Stages in conducting case study

- Conceptualizations of the topic.
- Selecting and emphasize a particular phenomenon, and deciding the research questions.
- Collecting all the raw data from interviews, observations or documents such as program files or reports, articles, and proposals.
- Organising, classifying and editing the raw data into an accessible file
- Formulates triangulation of observations and develops interpretation.
- Selecting an alternative interpretation followed by writing a report in holistic and systematic forms.

Child Life Specialists

Cynthia E. Dillow

My internship this semester has been at Niswonger Children's Hospital (NCH), working alongside a wonderful team of Certified Child Life Specialists (CCLS). In partnership with Mountain States Health Alliance (MSHA), Niswonger is designed to provide for the unique needs of children as well as dedicated to ensuring that every child has access to high-quality, cost-effective health care services (MSHA, 2016). While every hospital is an institution that functions off of various multidisciplinary teams, I had the opportunity to work with one in particular known as Child Life. The working definition of the child life profession, according to the Association of Child Life Professionals (ACLP) is "child life specialists are trained professionals with expertise in helping children and their families overcome life's most challenging events, and the importance of their services has been well documented (2017). Throughout the semester of the internship, I have personally found that pediatric stress during hospitalization is the greatest concern at Niswonger Children's Hospital.

The hardest adjustment throughout this semester has been having to look fear, confusion, and worry in the eyes of many children. I have never met an individual of any age that enjoys going to the hospital and to a child, it is a very stressful and potentially traumatic event. Children are not small adults; they are growing and developing every second and require unique techniques to help them manage their stress during difficult events, such as hospitalization. As I previously mentioned, pediatric stress is witnessed day in and day out by multidisciplinary teams caring for their patients.

Although it is a typical human reaction, if handled in the wrong manner, the child's hospital experience can be traumatizing and carried with them throughout their lifetime. It instantly shapes their outlook on medical professionals and healthcare settings as a whole. For example, when I was four years old, I had to have my four front teeth surgically removed. I am fully equipped to describe in detail the horrendous events that took place that morning, but to make a long story short, my personal experience with pediatric stress as a child during my hospitalization took a toll on me that I, thankfully, only vaguely carry with me today.

Mahmoud Kaddoura, Katie Cormier, and Joshua Leduc conducted a study in 2013 on the benefits of utilizing child life specialists when dealing with pediatric stress. The purpose of their research was to compare the viewpoints of nurses and child life specialists on what causes stress in pediatric patients and how to care for their family under challenging situations as well. They stated that "children are ripped from the normal and carefree routine of childhood and trapped in an up-ended world where doctors, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, dietitians, nurses, and child life specialists come streaming in and out of their small rooms poking, prodding, and talking to them in a foreign medical language" (Kaddoura, Cormier, & Leduc, 2013). Adding to this, "psychosocial attitudes toward illness, body image, and self-worth are all factors that affect the pediatric patient's ability to cope with stress" (McCaffery, 2006). Stress is inevitable to anyone hospitalized and especially to a child who does not understand why strangers are poking them and giving them "ouchies."

The 2013 study found that caring for a child under an extreme amount of stress needs to be handled in a very sensitive manner. After reading through the results of this study several times, I believe that the solution to easing a pediatric patient's stress during hospitalization can be explained remarkably by six identified themes: fear of the unknown and unfamiliar people, lying to the pediatric patient as an ineffective coping strategy, crying, sense of team, family-centered care to improve patient coping, and education and preparation (Kaddoura, Cormier, & Leduc, 2013). The first and greatest fear is fear of the unknown and unfamiliar people. As earlier discussed, children of younger ages do not fully understand that the hospital and medical professionals within are there to make them better. They are stuck inside a dull, cold room filled with medical equipment while many unfamiliar faces are running in and out of the room.

The second theme, lying to the pediatric patient as an ineffective coping strategy, is one of the biggest topics that my internship supervisor has told me about the child life profession and understandably so. Although in most cases, lying would be intended to ease the stress of the child, it only works for a short period of time. If you promise that a child is not going to get a shot, then moments afterward arrive the nurses to give an IV or draw blood...that child is automatically going to not believe a word said by whoever lied. The third theme, crying is agreed to be a form of coping mechanism. Let them cry as needed.

The fourth theme, a sense of team, refers to how the nurses utilize child life specialists during difficult situations. I often see this struggle at Niswonger between the nurses and the child life team. If the sense of team is off or not even apparent, then outside stress coming from the nurses and/or child life specialists are adding onto the stress of the patient. The fifth theme, family-centered care to improve patient coping, is one that is I witness often at Niswonger. The child life team is dedicated to not only taking care of the patients but also meeting the needs of their families as well. The last theme, education and preparation, is essentially what child life is all about. Child life specialists believe that pediatric stress levels can be significantly reduced by simply educating the children about what is going on, answering any questions they or their families might have, and preparing them for the "what's next."

My experience at Niswonger Children's Hospital has been nothing short of phenomenal. I have been able to observe, learn, evaluate, and grow personally by working alongside of such a model team of child life specialists. At Niswonger, as well as any hospital, pediatric stress will always be present and one of the greatest issues that the medical professionals will face. However, the solution to this problem is simple to understand: teach the children coping strategies. I am pleased to say that at Niswonger, this is the main goal of the child life specialists.

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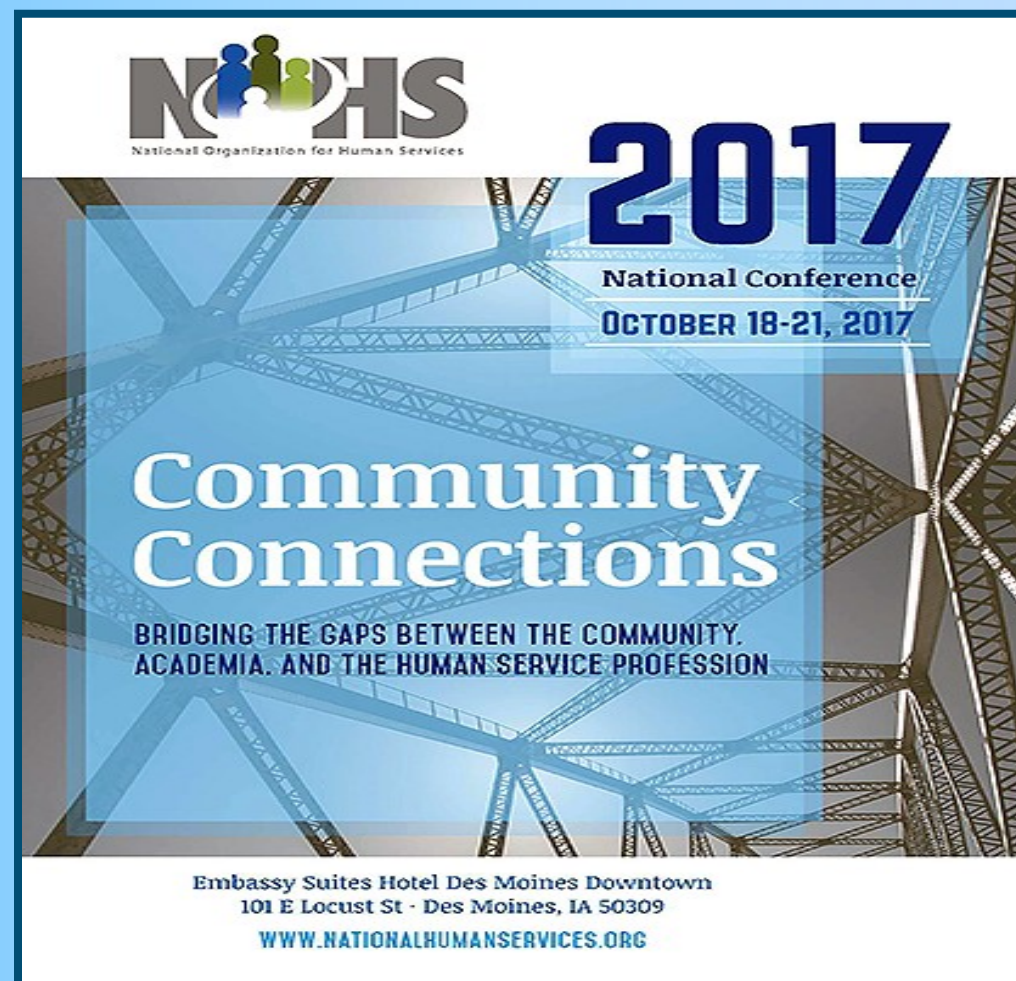
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I  Child Life



**Community Connections
Bridging the Gaps Between the Community, Academia,
and the Human Services Profession**

The 2017 National Organization for Human Services conference will be held in Des Moines, Iowa, October 18-21



**Book Reservations
Embassy Suites Hotel
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There's no shortage of what to do in Des Moines. Pick from free festivals and hundreds of miles of trails. Enjoy an outdoor concert in the heart of downtown. Sip on something local at a winery or brewery tour. Catch a city with 15 public golf courses, an outdoor ice skating rink, and horse racing...a place where you can rent a standup paddleboard at Gray's Lake and enjoy a Broadway musical at the Des Moines Civic Center. Greater Des Moines offers family-friendly fun at attractions like Adventureland Park and the Science Center of Iowa. It's a city with no shortage of free events and activities, no matter the season.

Learn more about Des Moines by visiting:
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Individuals and communities
transformed through human services

LINK

Newsletter of the National Organization for Human Services

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Contributions and comments may be
submitted to cockerha@etsu.edu

**We welcome your
articles and your input!**



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