



NEW DIRECTIONS

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May 2009 Professional Edition



Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day

**The largest conference of its type
in the USA**

The 21st Annual Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day conference is **for professionals and families – please invite the families you work with to attend.** The conference is to be held on Thursday, May 21, 2009, from 8:00 am - 4:00 pm at the Buffalo Convention Center. This event, which is open to the public, will bring together approximately 1500 people including individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, human service agency representatives, and local officials to explore current issues in the field. The day will include speakers, workshops, vendor exhibits, information on all kinds of services available to people with developmental disabilities and their families, live entertainment by people with disabilities, and an awards presentation.

A well known disability advocate, a zealous promoter of new ways of thinking about children and adults with disabilities, and a speaker in the national limelight as an agent of change, Kathie Snow, will be coming to Buffalo as the Keynote Speaker for Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day in Buffalo!

With humor and a rebellious spirit, Kathie enlightens and entertains participants in workshops and trainings across the United States and

Canada. She challenges the old ways of thinking and helps parents, people with disabilities, and professionals acquire new perceptions and attitudes—the first rung in the ladder of change.

For information on attending the conference, please contact 896-2180. This event is sponsored by DDAWNY (Developmental Disabilities Alliance of WNY), a joint effort of more than 20 human service organizations throughout Western New York.

Why We Do What We Do as a Social Worker

By Tanice
Pendergrass,
Linkage
Coordinator, Early Childhood
Connections



Social workers are professionals who have a strong desire to help improve the lives of others. We assist people by empowering them to cope with and work through issues in their everyday lives such as dealing with relationships and solving both personal and family problems.

Those of you, who know me, know I enjoy fashion and all it offers, however I take the most pride in wearing the colorful and interchangeable hats we wear as social workers. Some hats are worn more than others and some are even worn on top of each other. At any given time I am a researcher, a mediator, an advocate, a broker, and sometimes just a very good listener. This list can go on and

on, it's never ending and it's constantly changing. As a Social worker we quickly learn to transition from hat to hat in order to effectively get the job done.

The career life span of a social worker is constantly changing, keeping the job exciting while at the same time challenging. With the social and economic curve balls society continues to throw at us, our jobs will never be done. There will always be a bitter sweet need for a Social Worker. We Social Workers are individuals who care about others, while at the same time try to take care of self. We are totally committed to the mission and values of the organization that we *currently* work for, we don't mind working crazy hours, and the paperwork never ends.

So Why Do We DO What We Do...because we do and we BELIEVE in It.

Early Childhood Direction Center

ECDC is a free resource for professionals and families with children birth to five with suspected or diagnosed delays or disabilities. ECDC works collaboratively with the local Special Education Resource Training Center (SETRC) and Special Education Quality Assurance (SEQA) networks to provide technical support and professional development to regional school districts; preschool providers and child care providers. ECDC is funded by the New York State Education Department and hosted by Women and Children's Hospital.

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