

Human services



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What is Human Services Ruth Convery Introduction to Human

Services 08/27/10 Human Services is defined by The National Organization of Human Services as ??? The Human Services profession is one which promotes improved service delivery systems by addressing not only the quality of direct services, but by also seeking to improve accessibility, accountability, and coordination among professionals and agencies in service delivery. ??? Human services cover a wide range of career anywhere from child protective services, investigating child abuse to working at a hospice for emotional support for the terminally ill. What all human services do have in common is they help people in their time of need, when they are unable to meet their own needs. These needs might not being met due to the lack of social support or lack of education which could equal to a lack in employment. There are many different reasons why a person might need the help of a human service professional.

The long term goal though will always be the same to help people become self sufficient in meeting the different needs to become a healthy productive member of society. Before you can fully understand how human services works today you must know the history of Human Services. Human Services can be dated as far back as the Feudal System of the Eleventh Century. In those times wealthy landowners would allow serfs to live on their land and farm that portion of land.

The serfs were considered the land owners servant or property and were responsible for taking care of their basic needs. Religion also played a large part in the Feudal System. It was considered the Christian way of life to help those poorer than yourself. The Feudal System eventually faded away with

the start of The Industrial Revolution. People moved to cities where they were able to work in the factories. One no longer knew their neighbors like before. With the theories of predestination and social Darwinism people began to believe if you were poor that was how God intended you to be and helping the poor was not what God wanted. Society began to view the poor and homeless as criminals.

Laws were put into place to deal with the poor. These laws were known as The Elizabethan Poor Laws. These laws were in place for centuries. The laws stated that the sole responsibility of the poor fell onto the family. It also stated that relief for the poor should be handled at a local government level; the law also stated that you could not move to another community unless you were financially able to provide for yourself.

Part of these laws can still be seen into today's welfare policies. By the late 1800's the welfare system had become disorganized and so The Charity Organization Societies also know as COS movement began. The main purpose of The Charity Organization Societies was to first organize the welfare system to eliminate fraud but then also investigate each case to discover the root of the problem that was causing the poverty. The Charity Organization Societies was the first to use what we now know as caseworkers. These case workers were know as friendly visitors and would visit the home to find the reason for their poverty and then create a case plan. From 1860 to roughly 1910 the amount of Immigrants moving to America surged. Many of these immigrants were from non-English speaking countries and already suffered from poverty.

Many of them were unable to get work due to their lack of English and lived in awful, cramped living conditions. At this time there were no labor laws to protect them, child labor became prevalent and people worked for very low wages in unsafe condition. A woman by the name of Jane Addams who had a passion for the unfortunate situations of these immigrants had learned of a settlement house that was used in England by the name of Toynbee Hall. This settlement house was a welfare institution in the slums of London where workers lives side by side with the poor to improve social condition.

Addams was moved by this and set out to open the first settlement house in America that would be named The Hull House. The Hull House was revolutionary in that it viewed all people as individually equal not poor or wealthy. A few decades after The Hull House was created the stock market crashed and caused The Great Depression.

Many people who were before considered middle class were now unemployed and poor and in many cases homeless. In 1933 Roosevelt was elected President and set out to improve social welfare. This was to be known as The New Deal. These acts that were placed into law provided temporary jobs to millions of unemployed Americans as well as food to the unemployed.

The Social Security Act of 1935 was also formed. This act provided aid to dependent mothers and children as well as the elderly and the disabled. Although over time the way society perceives the poor has changed, human services and the desire to help those less fortunate has always been there. There are many theories that are used in human services. Of course like all

theories there is some controversy on whether these theories are able to be applied to all situations and environment.

One theory used in the world of human services is The Bronfenbrenner's™ Ecological Systems Theory. It states that any individual environment can be broken down to four separate entities. The first is the micro system this includes the individual and their family. The Mesosystem consists of one's™ neighborhood or community which can also include church or school. The Exosystems would consist of the local government and finally the Macrosystem includes the individual's™ society as a whole or culture. The theory believes that you can better understand a person when you understand all of these four entities.

Another theory that is closely related to The Bronfenbrenner's™ Ecological Systems Theory is The Person in Environment Theory that also believes to fully understand a person you must understand their whole environment. In the human service profession it is important to have a very broad knowledge of the profession and skills that are needed. This is known as a generalist practice. It is important so we are able to help with a wide range of situations and issues. This being said many human service professionals do work in specialized areas of interest. There are many different common intervention strategies that one will need to know in order to become a successful human service professional. The first thing to discuss with a new client is the importance of confidentiality and usually a confidentiality agreement is to be signed that would state whatever is said during meetings with that client is to be confidential unless the client shares a serious desire to hurt themselves

or someone else. Confidentiality is imperative to build a relationship of trust with the client.

After a confidentiality agreement is assigned A Clinical Assessment needs to be made. This may take up to several sessions to complete. The assessment will be used to not only learn the demographic history of the client but to also to receive a better understanding of the clients issues such as substance abuse, history of mental health problems, criminal history etc. Also an important part of this assessment will be learning the client's family history to get a better understanding of your client's family dynamic. Even after the initial Clinical Assessment it is important to continue assessing your client's issues as new issues may arise or as the clients trust for you grows they may feel more comfortable to tell you more. An extremely important intervention skill that you will need will be active listening and observation skills. You will need to learn how to listen for how clients react to certain topics and well any variations in stories.

A comment that may seem meaningless at first may actually have a deeper meaning. Also people in general talk as much with their body as they do their mouths, it is important to pay attention to how someone physical reacts to certain things. Maybe a topic maked a client nervously fidget these are all things to be aware of.

It is also important to have sympathy for a client who is going through a time of crises along with the many other emotions that may be needed to help a client but. You must learn to try and relate to that person and what they are going through. In the field of Human services it is important to set

professional boundaries with your clients and not allow your work to interfere with your own personal life. Another intervention strategy that is commonly used is task- centered casework; this is focused on problem solving.

Many people when put into a crisis mentally freeze and are unable to address the issue. This strategy makes it easier on the client by breaking down the main goal into little goals. Causing to take things one step at a time instead of being overwhelmed by the bigger picture. These are just a few of the intervention strategies used in human services. If you specialize in a certain field the strategies may vary. Like all professions human services has an ethical code of conduct. It is important to uphold a professional standard for your clients.

It is important to separate what behaviors you may emotional justify and what is ethically correct. It is easy to let your emotions get the better of you. It is so important in this career to have ethical boundaries so that we do not interfere with the process of helping our clients in their time of need. Human service??™s is the desire to help those in need or in time of crisis. Human service workers help people lead a self sufficient life in society bettering our world. Human service??™s has been around for centuries helping the poor or those emotionally in need and will continue for centuries to come.

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