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Orientation

Presentation: My Career of Choice or Consideration

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The Career that I am considering is social work. This is an interesting field that takes a very special person because of the delicate nature of this type of work. I am considering this field because I feel that I am a good listener, work well with people (especially children), and can counsel people easily enough. However, there are some strong requirements educationally and mentally with this field. I feel like I might want to be in this field because I get to listen to problems and help fix them. This might include family, discipline, and neglect.

Requirements: Bachelor's Degree is required, but a Master's Degree is strongly encouraged. There are many types of social worker, but we will be focusing on the children type. More advanced degrees allow for working with more of a case load because of knowledge and experience, membership into certain agencies to help pad resumes, a doctorate degree allows for teaching in universities and the obtaining of research positions. Masters programs usually require 900 hours minimum of supervised instruction or internship.

Nature: Problem solving required. Some situations may arise about abuse, addiction, conflict, disease (sometimes life threatening), disability, or homelessness. A strong desire for helping peoples lives is needed.

Hours: Volunteers usually work part-time. Full-time is usually a standard 40 hour work-week. This sometimes includes weekends and evenings because of their clients' sake.

Some work in offices. Some work in hospitals or other agencies. Some requiring more credentials than others. There are sometimes, of course meetings to attend.

Licensing/Scrutiny from the government: All states and the District of Columbia have licensing requirements and credential requirements. These vary by state. They look to be getting tighter as states are emphasizing communications and professional ethics.

Some people work in private practice but this requires at least a master's degree and at least some supervised training. Outlook on job availability is excellent as there are many people who need this service. However, there is more competition in cities. The rural areas are where the jobs are most plentiful.

Earnings: Entry level positions seem to be around a little more than \$21,000 a year with higher end positions in the \$50,000 range. Because an advanced degree is sometimes a requirement it is unclear whether a more advanced degree will net more money.

Pros of Chosen Field:

- 1) Help kids and adults with family matters.
- 2) Meet New People
- 3) Perhaps teach parents and kids about parenting/discipline.
- 4) Solve Problems

Cons:

- 1) Can't help situation in question sometimes

- 2) Sometimes adversely react to a social worker.
- 3) Sometimes frustration sets in because of the above.
- 4) The art of discipline sometimes isn't mastered when it comes to parents/kids. Sometimes parents don't help kids with disciplines of life. These are TOUGH to help or teach!

Pro and Con:

- 1) Listening: Helps and is needed. However, some things are hard to take (I hate my parents)
- 2) Sometimes gross neglect is found. Children might need to find foster parents. This is good and bad because a foster parent(s), however excellent he/she/they may be, still means splitting a biological family. This situation is TOUGH!
- 3) Extremely regulated by state and federal rules. Sometimes, this means a social worker has his/her hands tied and cannot stop a potentially devastating situation to happen to an innocent person who just needed guidance or a little parenting skills training. Even though the restraints on social workers and situations are necessary to prevent bad things from happening, sometimes the same regulations could very well stop the right thing from being done in some circumstances. For example if neglect is found to be present, but the child is clearly mature enough to stay at home without the parent. For example, if a 12 year old should not be left alone by law, but the 12 year old is extremely mature for his/her age and has numbers and a cell phone to call for help with, so the child stays at home while the parent is out. If a social worker was

called by a neighbor and an investigation insues that child could be lost to the parent for neglect.

However, the pros for me outweigh the cons all in all. So, that's another reason why I am considering social work for a career.

Where I Got My information: Most of the information in this presentation is taken from the Occupational Outlook Handbook (2004-2005 edition). Some of this presentation came out of logic and talking to people over time (not related to presentation). Some came out of interpretation of the handbook which may or may not be correct. This presentation falls into one of my strengths which is teaching.