



# STAFF ETHICS

“People First Language”  
Respectful Interactions with Clients

# OBJECTIVES

- ▶ At the end of this session, the participants will be able to:
  - Define ethics and “People First Language”
  - Discuss the DSW’s ethical responsibilities
  - Explain confidentiality
  - List the consumer’s rights
  - Give examples of what is and what is not “People First Language”
  - Explain the meaning of “Respectful Interactions”
  - Explain solicitation and what it means to the DSW

# DEFINITIONS

- ▶ Ethics – knowledge of what is right and wrong; these help guide conduct
- ▶ Laws – rules set by the government to help protect the public
- ▶ Solicit – to approach with a request or a plea; to lure; to request strongly
- ▶ Etiquette – code of proper behavior and courtesy

# DSW ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- ▶ Keeping all consumer and staff information confidential
- ▶ Being honest at all times, including when documenting consumer records and reports
- ▶ Being trustworthy
- ▶ Not accepting gifts or tips
- ▶ Reporting abuse or suspected abuse
- ▶ Following all agency policies and procedures
- ▶ Upholding consumer rights

# CONFIDENTIALITY

- ▶ The right of an individual to have personal, identifiable medical information kept private
- ▶ Personal and medical information given to the provider will not be disclosed to others unless the individual has given specific permission for such release.
- ▶ Applies to other medical as well as personal information

# THE ETHICAL DSW

- ▶ “Honesty is the Best Policy”
- ▶ Trustworthiness is a moral value considered to be a virtue. People who are trustworthy are considered dependable, loyal and reliable
- ▶ Gifts or tips shall be refused graciously
- ▶ Suspected abuse by family, workers or others shall be reported to your supervisor immediately
- ▶ All agency policies and procedures are to be followed

# ETHICS SELF – ASSESSMENT

- ▶ Have you ever:
  - Pretended to be sick when you really weren't?
  - Spread rumors about someone or gossiped?
  - Ignored an organizational rule or procedure on purpose?
  - Withheld information that was needed by others?
  - Knowingly let someone screw up and get into trouble?
  - Been less than honest?

# POOR EXCUSES FOR UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR

- ▶ Everyone else does it
- ▶ They'll never miss it
- ▶ I don't have time to do it right
- ▶ No one will know; no one will care
- ▶ "So and so" does it



# POOR EXCUSES FOR UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR

- ▶ Some rules were meant to be broken
- ▶ It's not my job
- ▶ That is good enough
- ▶ I can let them think it was my idea
- ▶ No one told me not to do it

# ETHICS VIDEO

- ▶ Students will view videos

<http://www.imdb.com/video/sony/vi811466777/>  
“Dilbert” video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raNIYCluyPc>  
“It’s An Ethical Life”

# CONSUMER RIGHTS

- ▶ Quality of life
- ▶ Service and activities to maintain a high level of wellness – “The Best They Can Be”
- ▶ Fully informed about rights and services
- ▶ Participate in their own care
- ▶ Make independent choices

# CONSUMER RIGHTS

- ▶ Privacy and confidentiality
- ▶ Dignity, respect and freedom
- ▶ Security of possessions
- ▶ Right to transfer and/or discharge
- ▶ Right to complain
- ▶ Right to visitors

# DISABILITY

- ▶ People with disabilities constitute our nation's largest minority group
- ▶ “Handicapped” old term that evokes pity, fear and other negative images
- ▶ “Disability” not a problem, but a need
- ▶ **Your attitude changes everything!**

# DISABILITY

- ▶ Disability one of many characteristics of being human
- ▶ One in 5 Americans has a disability diagnosis
- ▶ Only minority group anyone might become part of at any time
- ▶ A person with a disability is more like people without disabilities than different

# “PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE”

- ▶ Preferred terminology developed by the disability community
- ▶ Non-prejudicial language
- ▶ Objective way of acknowledging, communicating and reporting on disabilities
- ▶ Eliminates generalizations, assumptions and stereotypes by focusing on the person rather than the disability
- ▶ Refers to the individual first and the disability second

# “PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE”

Say:

- \*People with disabilities
- \*People without disabilities
- \*People with intellectual disabilities
- \*A person who has autism

Instead of:

- \*The handicapped or disabled
- \* Normal people
- \* Retarded, slow-learner
- \*Autistic



# “PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE”

Say:

Instead of:

\*People with mental illness

\*crazy, insane, lunatic

\*Person who is deaf, hearing impaired

\*the deaf

\*Person who is deaf and cannot speak

\* deaf and dumb

\*Person who is blind visually impaired

\* the blind

# PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE

**Say:**

- \*He/she is of short stature
- \*He/she has a congenital disability
- \*He/she has seizures
- \*Accessible bathrooms; reserved parking

**Instead of:**

- \* a dwarf or midget
- \* he/she has a birth defect, is crippled
- \* he/she has fits
- \*handicapped bathrooms  
handicapped parking

# WHAT DO YOU CALL PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES???

- ▶ Men, women, boys, girls, students, mom Sue's brother, Mr. Smith, Rosita, a neighbor, employer, coworker, customer, chef, teacher, scientist, athlete, adults, children, tourists, retirees, actors, comedians, musicians, blondes, brunettes, SCUBA divers, computer operators, individuals, members, leaders, people, voters, Louisianans, friends, or any other would you would use for a person.

# RESPECTFUL INTERACTIONS

- ▶ Cultural diversity has to do with the wide variety of people throughout the world from many different cultures
- ▶ Culture may have an impact on how people behave when ill
- ▶ Learn about your client's culture – language, dress, traditions, religious beliefs

# RESPECTFUL INTERACTIONS

- ▶ Treat adults like adults, not like children
- ▶ Respect your consumer's diversity
- ▶ Address all people with disabilities directly; do not speak to them through others who may be accompanying them
- ▶ Golden Rule: Treat others as you wish to be treated

# RESPECTFUL INTERACTIONS

- ▶ Do not focus on disability unless it is essential; focus on quality of life issues
- ▶ Do not portray successful people with disabilities as superhuman or heroes; raises false expectation that people with disabilities should accomplish the same things
- ▶ Do not sensationalize a disability using terms like “afflicted with”, “crippled with”, “suffers from”, “victim of”, etc.

# RESPECTFUL INTERACTIONS

- ▶ **PUT THE PERSON FIRST, NOT THE DISABILITY**
- ▶ **EMPHASIZE ABILITIES**, not limitations
- ▶ Do not use terms such as “handicapable”, “mentally different”, “physically inconvenienced” and “physically challenged”
- ▶ Do not imply people are “diseased” when speaking about disabilities resulting from a prior disease

# RESPECTFUL INTERACTIONS

- ▶ You may be the one the consumer or their family turns to when they feel fear, anger or stress
- ▶ The best ways to respond:
  - \* Listen closely and do not interrupt
  - \* Offer support and encouragement
  - \* Show that you care
  - \* Respond with meaningful messages



# ARE WE TALKING ABOUT BEING POLITICALLY CORRECT ?!?!?!?

Positive, respectful language is more than a fad about political correctness. It is a way of communicating and reporting about disabilities. It eliminates generalizations, assumptions and stereotypes. People First Language promotes the dignity and respect that every person deserves.

# THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

## ▶ PEOPLE WHO USE WHEELCHAIRS:

- \* Always ask if they would like assistance before you help
- \* Sit or kneel to get at eye level if the conversation lasts more than a few minutes

# THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

## PEOPLE WHO HAVE SPEECH DIFFICULTIES:

- \* Give whole, unhurried attention
- \* Keep your manner encouraging, rather than correcting
- \* Allow extra time, give help when needed, don't speak for the person
- \* Ask questions that require short answers, a nod, or shake of the head
- \* Don't pretend to understand when you don't
- \* Look for aids like pictures or symbols that might help

# THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

- ▶ PEOPLE WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED:
  - \* Ask first
  - \* When providing assistance, don't grab or start steering; allow the person to take your arm, bent at the elbow
  - \* Use the person's name to start conversing to let them know where it is directed
  - \* Let them know when you leave
  - \* Identify each piece of money or other papers as you place it in their hand

# THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

- ▶ PEOPLE WHO ARE HEARING IMPAIRED:
  - \* If necessary, get the person's attention with a wave of the hand or light tap on the shoulder
  - \* Use paper and pencil if necessary
  - \* Speak clearly and slowly but don't exaggerate. **DON'T SHOUT!** Use body language or facial expression to help
  - \* Maintain eye contact; allow clear view of your face (they may lip read)

# SOLICITATION

- ▶ The rule prohibits soliciting consumers from other provider agencies
- ▶ The worker shall never advise the consumer regarding to which agency they should hire
- ▶ The worker shall not borrow or receive money in any way, nor misappropriate or misuse the consumer's property

# THE END