

## **Social Work Staff Reveals Career's Assets**

By Anya Armes Weber

March is Social Work Month, and the Focus is featuring responses from social work staff about their career challenges and rewards. This is our second installment.

### **Lisa Durbin**

*Child Safety Branch Manager, Franklin County*

After almost 22 years of social work practice, I often think back to the clients I have worked with over the years and hope that seeds I may have planted took root. I went into social work wanting to keep kids safe and help families to deal with whatever struggles they were facing. It has definitely been a much harder job than I thought it would be in terms of trying to make changes in a public child welfare system and help families.

I have been lucky in my career to have the support of good supervisors who gave me a good foundation for social work practice, an agency that supported me in getting my master's degree and co-workers who were, and are, committed to helping children and families reach their maximum potential. Without these things, I am not sure I could have stayed in public child welfare.

The satisfaction for me in being a social worker has come from being able to help an elderly woman stay in her home and be independent, while helping a young mother learn to safely care for her young children, to finding a permanent home for a child who needs to belong somewhere to a belligerent teen who needs someone to care about them.

It has been a tough road, and one that I thought many times about leaving. But I have no regrets about the profession I chose and hope others out there will take on this challenge.

## **Ten-Ure Plans 60th Annual Conference**

The state employees Ten-Ure organization will hold its 60th annual conference May 12 and 13, at the Best Western Inn, Louisville. The theme for this year is "60 Years of Serving You." The conference will feature workshops on General Assembly results, health care and you and online security. The organization will have a special event on Wednesday evening for the attendees. Service pins and awards will also be presented at the conference. A brunch will be held to honor all state retirees. The Ten-Ure Tattler is now posted on the organizations website at [www.ten-ure.org](http://www.ten-ure.org). For more information, contact [Gary.Brooks@ky.gov](mailto:Gary.Brooks@ky.gov).

## **Colon Cancer: Know Your Risk**

Colorectal cancer is cancer of the colon or rectum. It's as common in women as it is in men. This year, more than 142,500 people will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer and nearly 51,400 will die of the disease.

With certain types of screening, this cancer can be prevented by removing polyps (grape-like growths on the wall of the intestine) before they become cancerous. Several screening tests detect colorectal cancer early, when it can be more easily and successfully treated.

There are several risk factors for colon cancer, including:

- People age 50 and older
- People who smoke
- People who are overweight or obese, especially those who carry fat around their waists
- People who aren't physically active
- People who drink alcohol in excess, especially men
- People who eat a lot of red meat (such as beef, pork or lamb) or processed meat (such as bacon, sausage, hot dogs or cold cuts)
- People with personal or family histories of colorectal cancer or benign (not cancerous) colorectal polyps
- People with personal histories of inflammatory bowel disease (such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease)
- People with family histories of inherited colorectal cancer or inherited colorectal problems

There are several steps you can take to reduce your risk of colon cancer, including colon cancer screenings. Specific measures you can take include:

- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes, at least five days a week.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Don't smoke. If you do smoke, quit.
- If you drink alcohol, have no more than one drink a day if you're a woman or two drinks a day if you're a man.
- Eat fruits, vegetables and whole grains to help you get and stay healthy.
- Eat less red meat and cut out processed meat.
- If you're at average risk for colorectal cancer, start getting screened at age 50. If you're at higher risk, you may need to start regular screening at an earlier age and be screened more often. If you're older than 75, ask your doctor if you should continue to be screened. The best time to get screened is before you have any symptoms.

For more information, visit [www.preventcancer.org](http://www.preventcancer.org).

Focus Health Tip

### **A Resource for Healthy Eyes**

Millions of people have problems with their eyes or vision every year. This site offers science-based tools and tips for keeping your eyes healthy. Learn about eye exams, low vision, glaucoma and diabetic eye disease. Take online quizzes and send free e-cards about eye health to your friends. The site is available in English and Spanish.

<http://www.nei.nih.gov/healthyeyes/>

*From the National Institutes of Health*

### **Employee Enrichment**

By Anya Armes Weber

The American Psychological Association's Adults and Children Together (ACT) Against Violence campaign to reduce family violence reminds families to "rethink" when they feel angry.

The tips can work for us at work, too, to reduce office stress. Remember them the next time you feel irritated by something at work.

- Recognize what makes you angry.
- Empathize with the other person's feelings
- Think of positive things about the situation.
- Hear what the other person is saying to you.
- Include "I" messages to tell how you feel.
- Notice what happens to your body.
- Keep your attention on the present situation.

Learn more about ACT Against Violence [online](#).