

A list of Activity Ideas for Branches of the SASW

Below is a list of ideas for different events and activities that Branches might wish to use to either promote Social Work Week or for ongoing activities throughout the year. This list has been gathered from a variety of sources including the CASW website, a brainstorming session with branch reps and the Public Relations Committee in 2004, and from more recent feedback from branches. If you have anything to add to this list please submit your ideas to the SASW office.

Ideas from the branches

1. Research Seminar
2. Luncheons with guest speakers.
3. Media/newsprint/TV coverage – take advantage of opportunities.
4. Weekly papers (stories from Social Work). Interview a Social Worker and submit the write-up to the local paper.
5. Local TV station interviews.
6. Public supper with students and media invited.
7. Recreational events to invite branch participation in a fun way.
8. Sponsor a free movie or family swim.
9. Collect food for local food bank.
10. Sell roses (money goes to Charity or non-profit organization)
11. Request a Social Work Week proclamation from the local Mayor and council.
12. Host a movie night for the public or other professionals and show a movie, documentary, power point, etc. that has relevance to the profession (ie, “The Art of Listening”).
13. Hold 50/50 draws and the winner gets to choose the charity.
14. Attend career shows and informational events and promote a career in Social Work.
15. Make it a priority to distribute SASW materials whenever possible (ie, brochures, posters, note pads, bookmarks).
16. Educate people about what coverage is available for Social Work services in employee benefit plans (brochures available from SASW).
17. Education/PR with other Faculty areas (ie, Education) so students in other faculties have a better understanding of what Social Workers do.
18. Educate the public about what Social Work education involves.
19. Challenge other professions in the community with fun recreational events to raise awareness and money for charity or non-profit (ie, golf, curling, slow pitch, brain games, puzzles, “Amazing Race” event, be creative it doesn’t have to be athletic). Invite the media and strengthen our identity and visibility in the community.
20. Whenever possible include a charity aspect in your functions to contribute to the community and let the media know.
21. Become involved with local Social Work classes and students.
22. Quality door prizes and free food are always great turnout insurance!

From the CASW Website (<http://www.casw-acts.ca>)

Activity Ideas for NSWW

Pursuit of Social Justice for the Community

During times of celebration, social work maintains its commitment to the pursuit of social justice. A number of activities can be used to raise awareness and promote social justice within the local, national, and global communities.

Participate in activities developed by CASW

CASW develops many tools that can be used during National Social Work Week to pursue social justice.

Distribute copies of the National Social Work Week 2006 Proclamation

→ The 2006 Proclamation, available on the CASW website, describes what this year's theme means to social workers and calls upon others to contribute to the advancement and well-being of communities. You can print and distribute paper copies of the proclamation or use the "E-mail to a friend" feature quickly and easily to send others a web-link to the proclamation.

Take part in the CASW letter lobbying campaign

→ Politicians, whether local, provincial/territorial or national, influence the policies that have a direct effect on the public. During March, CASW will post a letter on the CASW website that outlines the impact of social issues on communities and the expectation for governments to create change. You can easily forward this letter to the Prime Minister and all the leaders of federal political parties. Starting March 6, 2006, click here to read and forward this letter. Also you can print, adapt, and sign the letter and send it to local and provincial/territorial politicians. Encourage those around you to become involved in the letter writing campaign.

Distribute CASW press releases

→ On March 8, International Women's Day, CASW will issue a media release based on recent reports on the poverty of women in Canada. Help to raise awareness about this important issue by sending the media release to local media and other groups or individuals of interest.

Arrange your own social justice activities

Meet your local politician

→ Arrange a meeting with your federal or provincial/territorial politician. Remember that such a meeting will be short, so be sure to have some points prepared to discuss, including any relevant statistics, facts and questions. Start contacting your politician's office now to make the necessary arrangements.

Finding strength in numbers

→ Social workers are well aware that there is strength in numbers. When participating in outlined activities, you can enlist the support of many people. Contact social workers who have similar concerns or awareness of the issues, get in touch with colleagues in your community, and present your concerns as a group. Contact your local school of social work and discuss the possibility of meeting with a group of students, providing them with information, and enlisting their support. Students may also show reciprocal interest and may contact social workers in agencies in their community to prepare and participate in joint activities.

Find a journalist

→ Locate people in the media who are responsive to social work objectives. Arrange for a variety of social workers in different fields of practice to be interviewed so that awareness is raised about different issues, or present the face of social work in a series of articles.

Horse's Derriere Award

→ Find a local, provincial/territorial, or national issue that has had a negative effect on clients or on social work practice. Give the Horse's Derriere Award to a provincial/territorial party, politician, citizen's group, or some other worthy recipient who has remained ignorant of the issues despite repeated attempts to raise awareness. Make sure the media is involved. Note: This project is not for the faint-hearted. It will receive marvelous press, but it can come back to haunt the sponsors.

Strengthening the Profession

National Social Work Week is an opportunity to promote the profession by raising awareness about social work roles, knowledge, skills, and values. These activities help the social work community, as well as bringing together other community members.

Sharing knowledge

Feature a display

→ Prepare a display that is accessible to the public or to others within your workplace. The display could provide information around several themes including the role of social work, the training and education achieved by social work staff, the years of experience among social work staff, and the variety of staff expertise.

Host a speaker

→ Organize educational sessions and invite special guests to speak on relevant topics.

Arrange a lecture series

→ Host a social work lecture series, in which different social workers are asked to make presentations throughout the week on an area of expertise. These educational sessions can be for social workers only, or you can use this opportunity to promote social work expertise and invite anyone interested to the session.

Recognizing achievement

Strengthening the profession also means celebrating past success and current achievements, and there is no better time than National Social Work Week to recognize success and excellence in social work practice.

Send an e-card

→ CASW has developed a card that can be sent to a social worker whom you know, congratulating him or her on past efforts and encouraging continued work. This card will be available on the CASW website all through the month of March. With a simple click of the mouse, show the social workers in your life how much their work means to you.

Recognize a colleague's current achievements

→ Various provincial/territorial or national awards are given out annually at special occasions of the associations. National Social Work Week is an opportune time to consider such events. A presentation could be made at a tea, a wine and cheese gathering, or a dinner. People like to be honoured, and the occasion can be used as a media event for the associations, as well a means of advertising the week.

Recognize past achievements

→ Organize an afternoon or evening of dialogue for retired social workers to share tales of the past. Create an environment of fun and nostalgia that speaks of struggle and triumph relative to personal

services, community organization, policy development, administration, or other areas of endeavour.

Honour colleagues with ribbons

→ A ribbon celebration strengthens professional relationships. Here's how it works: Each profession, role, or position is designated a particular colour of ribbon (for example, social workers in child welfare could be red, social workers in mental health green, support staff blue, nurses purple, managers yellow, and so on). Each person is given a certain number of ribbons to be distributed to other staff members to show appreciation in a personalized and immediate way when they are seen doing a good job. The person being recognized wears the ribbon, which acts as a visual indicator that people are appreciating and supporting each other.

Since success is often the result of the efforts of many, an extension of the "ribbon celebration" incorporates a supply of white ribbons, to recognize others who have helped to achieve a goal. For example, if a social worker receives a blue ribbon from a colleague for a job well done, the recipient at the same time is given three white ribbons to distribute to colleagues who helped make that achievement possible. When recognition encourages a chain of recognition, the effect is strengthened and a culture of appreciation is created.

Roast a colleague

→ Locate a prominent social worker who is willing to be roasted in an open forum. Selection of the "roastee" is important since this person must have sound mental health, a keen wit, and the ability to articulate humorous responses to the "roasters". A roast with the right participants can be an entertaining affair.

Celebratory Events for Social Workers

Take some time to participate in social activities with fellow social workers. You can use the following ideas with the social workers in your team, agency, field, or community. Consultation with supervisors or agencies may result in arrangements for social workers to take some time to celebrate over an extended lunch break or an early evening. If that's not possible, break the winter blues by getting together right after work.

→ Plan a potluck lunch or dinner (in the past, some social workers have asked people to bring ethnic foods to celebrate the diversity of the

group).

→ Plan a pizza party.

→ Host a dessert buffet. This is an excellent way to bring social workers together to mingle and share over some delicious sweet treats.

→ Host a karaoke contest. Why not give social workers a chance to show their many talents either in front of other social workers or a larger audience?

Host an Open House

An open house during National Social Work Week can serve many purposes. Don't forget to advertise your events for the public in community papers (usually a free service).

Spread the word

→ Invite local guests and members of the public to attend an open house to learn more about your agency or organization. Provide information (pamphlets, fact sheets) about social work and social work's contribution to the agency.

Celebrate community contributions

→ Invite organizations, agencies, and individuals that are involved and active in the community to an open house that celebrates their contributions. This provides an opportunity for networking and sharing of information about social work and the agency.

Collaborate with others

& Interdisciplinary collaboration has recently become a national focus. In particular within the field of health, two national health care projects, Enhancing Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Primary Health Care Initiative (EICP) and Canadian Collaborative Mental Health Initiative (CCMHI), have been bringing health care providers together on a national level for the past two years. The definition of health, according to these two projects, encompasses the broader determinants of health, so the ideas of collaboration could influence many fields of social work practice. At the grass-roots level, invite a variety of professionals within the community to discuss collaboration, what it is, and how it will work in your community.
