

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505**

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Weisz honored by N.D. Family Based Services Association

BISMARCK, N.D. – Rita Weisz, regional supervisor for child welfare services at the N.D. Department of Human Services' West Central Human Service Center in Bismarck, received the lifetime membership award from the N.D. Family Based Services Association for outstanding service to children and families. Peers honored Weisz for devoting over three decades of her career to protecting children and strengthening families.

Weisz is responsible for child welfare services in the region. She provides consultation and support to county social service offices in Burleigh, Emmons, Grant, Kidder, McIntosh, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Oliver, Sheridan, and Sioux counties as they respond to reports of child abuse or neglect, make court-ordered out-of-home placements, and provide therapeutic and supportive services to children and families.

Weisz is a licensed social worker. She joined the department in 1985 as assistant regional supervisor of child welfare services at West Central and was promoted in 1989 to regional supervisor. She worked at Burleigh County and Stutsman County social service offices prior to joining the state agency.

She expressed appreciation to her colleagues, and said, "I am pleased that there is more emphasis today on working with children and families to keep children safe while sustaining family relationships, when possible. The key is prevention. This involves identifying at-risk families and providing in-home services such as family therapy, individual counseling, and mentoring for parents so they can learn to nurture their children. Then we can truly make a difference for future generations."

The N.D. Family Based Service Association has over three hundred members and advocates for the development and expansion of family-based services while providing professional development, networking opportunities, and support for child welfare professionals.

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