

Stephanie Fisher, RN, PHN, Oral History 2010

Interview with Stephanie Fisher (15:46-19:24)

JT: My name is Juliette Tinney I'm a UNCW student nurse. We're in Wilmington, NC October 28th, 2010 and this is a nursing interview for the Public Health Association Conference.

Good afternoon.

SF: Good afternoon.

JT: What is your name?

SF: My name is Stephanie Fisher.

JT: And when were you born?

SF: October 2nd 1972.

JT: And where did you grow up?

SF: In Newbern, North Carolina.

JT: So why did you decide to become a nurse? What most attracted you to nursing?

SF: To be honest I did not want to become a nurse. I did not get accepted into a physical therapy program. I applied to nursing and they accepted me. I wouldn't make any changes. I love it.

JT: Where and when did you go to nursing school?

SF: I went to East Carolina University for my Bachelor's and my Master's degree. I finished my BSA in '95 and my Master's in 2004.

JT: So tell me about your nursing education as it relates to community and public health.

SF: I've worked in public health for the past twelve years. I have a Master's degree in community health leadership.

JT: So why did you decide to become a community health nurse?

SF: I actually got into public health wanting a change from the hospital, needing a change from the hospital. I worked at Craven County health department for ten plus years, and I really, really got bit by public health. I think it helps people, it helps the community, and it helps the overall population.

JT: So tell me about your first job in community health.

SF: I was a health promotion coordinator and I also worked part-time as an STD immunizationist at the health department.

JT: And what is your current position?

SF: I'm a public health nurse consultant, childhood nurse consultant in division of Children and Youth.

JT: So tell me about your most memorable story in public health nursing.

SF: I have a story. I was working in the STD clinic. I had done an STD screening and I was in there all day and there was this guy that came in. I didn't know him. I knew of him, but I didn't let him know how I had known his name, his first name. He was pretty popular in high school and all. I screened him for an STD, and he comes to take my daughter out that very same night. I saw him and he saw me, and he never came back (laughs). He didn't come back. He was very nice. He took her out, but when he brought her home she wondered what happened and I didn't say anything and he, just kind of, didn't either.

(Both laugh)

JT: That is a great story. If you had to do it all over again, would you be a community health nurse?

SF: Absolutely. I don't see myself doing anything else. Because you get to help people, you get to work in the health field, you see your progress, and you see the work that you can do now and in the future.

JT: Is there anything else you'd like to share with nurses in the future who are interested in community health nursing in 2010?

SF: A lot of people think that public health nursing is boring, or they don't really see the need for it, but essentially we protect the health of the public on every single level. So if you think that's something you'd like to do, working in community health, you can do a variety of things from school health, education, STD immunization, bio-terrorism, you can do it all. All in one house.

JT: Thank you so much.

SF: You're welcome.