

Social Work Career Portfolio

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Introduction to Social Work (SWK 2000-800)

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Introduction

Social Work is more than what I first perceived. When I was a child I viewed social workers as protectors and heroes. They just seemed to come to the rescue. While taking Introduction to Social Work it has enlightened my understanding of how social work promotes social change and development. The main goal for productive social work is to promote empowerment of people and their communities. There is so much to learn about diversity, the code of ethics, and laws and limitations. However, social work is understanding human development and defending the well-being and humanitarian rights of individuals, families, and communities. Social work is a reward in itself because it empowers one's ability to make a difference and value the rights of all mankind.

In studying social work, there are many professions and work settings for many population groups. When looking into social work you won't just find one line of work. The social work career is very complex and covers many areas, such as; child welfare and adult services, mental health and substance abuse, criminal justice for violence, crisis and trauma, policy practice, and rural and international social work, including military.

It would be wise to evaluate and do an inventory of your interests and passions before deciding which field of social work you would be interested in. If you are good with children and have patience and compassion to help them, you may consider school social work. If you have an interest to serve families suffering from substance abuse and/or violence you may consider social work in mental health. However, it is very important to understand the cultural needs, diverse community challenges, and the importance in having strong cognitive behavior skills.

Part A:**Social Work Job Advertisement Summary**

Group 1:	Child Welfare or Older Adult Services/School Social Work
Hiring Agency/Organization	Thompson Child & Family Focus
Job Title	Family Support Case Worker
Job Qualifications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High School Diploma 2. One year experience in the field 3. Valid NC Driver's license
Job Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parent/caregiver of a child who receives services 2. Maintain flexibility in schedule to meet needs of families 3. Ability to be non-reactive in the midst of high stress 4. Trauma informed philosophy and congruent behavior 5. Ability to work with adults/children from diverse environments
Role of Social Worker	<p>Solution focused mindset</p> <p>Preventative services</p> <p>Clinical/behavioral treatment</p>
Population to Serve	Children and family
Skills Needed/Required	<p>High degree of ethical behavior</p> <p>Integrity</p> <p>Ability to work with adults and children of diversity</p>
Level of Social Work Practice	Trauma informed philosophy and congruent behaviors
Supervising Agency/Organization	Talentcare
Link of Job Advertisement	https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/search/?currentJobId=3023576150&geoId=102264677&keywords=family%20support%20worker&location=Charlotte%2C%20North%20Carolina%2C%20United%20States

Group 2:	Mental Health/Substance Abuse/Crisis, Trauma & Disaster
Hiring Agency/Organization	ProKatcher
Job Title	Patient Care Assistant
Job Qualifications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Four year High School Diploma 2. Completion of NYS Department of Health training for Phlebotomy 3. Completion of facility-based training program in performance of electrocardiographs/life support
Job Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check vitals, weight, specimens 2. Record finding 3. Administer emergency first aid 4. Report Observations
Role of Social Worker	Advocate, observations
Population to Serve	Adult/children
Skills Needed/Required	Basic Life Support Medical Assistance Patient Care Technician Nursing
Level of Social Work Practice	Macro/Mezzo levels
Supervising Agency/Organization	ProKatchers LLC
Link of Job Advertisement	https://www.careerbuilder.com/jobs?keywords=patient+care+assistant&location=brookly%2C+ny%2C+ny

Group 3:	Community, Policy, Management and Administrative
Hiring Agency/Organization	Genesis Healthcare
Job Title	Assistant Director of Nursing-ADON-RN
Job Qualifications	Graduate of accredited school of nursing 3 year full-time clinical experience Knowledge of MDS process
Job Responsibilities	Serve as clinical operational liaison between nurse unit and director Daily clinical operations of nursing unit Collaborate with Director of Nursing to develop budget Foster an environment of continuous improvement and mentor
Role of Social Worker	Advocate/patient safety/patient safety and privacy
Population to Serve	Short-term/Long-term patients
Skills Needed/Required	Perform evaluation process Interview/Orientation Assist in employing strong quality improvement Able to assist Director in all areas needed
Level of Social Work Practice	Complex Social Work Macro level
Supervising Agency/Organization	Pembroke Center-Genesis Healthcare
Link of Job Advertisement	https://www.monster.com/jobs/search?q=assistant+director+of+nursing-adon-rn&where=pembroke%2C+nc&page=1&so=m.h.sh

Group 4:	Rural Social Work/Military Social Work
Hiring Agency/Organization	Lutheran Social Services of MN
Job Title	Positive Support Specialist
Job Qualifications	One year experience with individuals with maladaptive behavioral history Knowledge of behavior management Strong interpersonal skills Ability to work with a variety of individuals Driver's license
Job Responsibilities	Assist individuals to be more independent in essential life Work with high functioning individuals with challenging behavior and aggression.
Role of Social Worker	Behavioral management Social Service Organization
Population to Serve	Children, youth, families, people with disabilities, older adults and military veterans
Skills Needed/Required	Strong interpersonal skills Ability to work with diversity Ability to acknowledge individual boundaries Knowledge of local community resources
Level of Social Work Practice	Meso, micro
Supervising Agency/Organization	CareerOneStop Job Finder
Link of Job Advertisement	https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Jobs/find-jobs-details.aspx?keyword=military%20social%20work&currentpage=2&lang=en&fc=0&jvid=59ED47EFC08846EDA763BB5795B27865206&detailpage=true

Part B: Synthesize**What Social Workers Do**

Social work is defending humanity and protecting the safety and well-being of individuals in communities, providing a voice for those vulnerable to abuse, discrimination, social injustice, neglect, and poverty, along with respect for human diversity. Family Support Case Workers assist children and families at risk of abuse and neglect; screening records and reports of suspected abuse, student truancy, emergency assistance, suicide assessments, and homelessness. Patient Care Assistants ensure of family's basic needs following patient care in money management, nutrition, personal health/hygiene, and proper discipline. Assistant Directors of Nursing ensure quality care is provided for patients including mental health and patient comfort. Positive Support Specialists assist Social Workers in treating clients with behavioral issues. (Segal, 2019)

Social Worker Tasks

Social worker tasks include identifying those in need with everyday problems, advocate for client well-being, and assist in crisis situations. A Family Support Case Worker conducts assessments in case planning and management and communicates effectively with children, youth, and families to build parenting and problem-solving skills. A Patient Care Assistant communicates with clients providing critical thinking and cultural competence; collaborating with social workers to provide assessments of home needs. A PCA also works closely with social workers to keep informed of how things are going in the home. Assistant Director of Nursing and social workers work together on "interdisciplinary health care teams." Social workers can use nursing documentation to determine any suspicious behavior in a patient home setting, such as; abuse, neglect,

poverty, etc. A Positive Support Specialist must have behavior analysis skills to comprehend behaviors, provide cognitive behavior therapy, provide crisis intervention, and provide skills to strengthen independence with clients.

Work Setting/Context

Social workers work settings are very diverse. Cases require different settings such as; mental health clinics, hospitals, schools, and even inside a home. The day may start in their stationed office, but effective social work demands travel and different areas for analysis. Working with individuals, communities, or organizations, even addiction treatment centers and child support services.

General Skills

Social work takes passion and dedication. It takes commitment to analyze every area of a case to be able to provide the most effective services for individuals and families in need of services. Empathy, compassion, and patience are emotional skills that an effective social worker naturally possesses. You cannot help those in need if you can't identify and understand a person's experience. One must be able to communicate with case-workers, doctors, mental health staff, counselors, and communities. Strong communication skills help social workers read body language and pick up on any suspicious activity or behavior. Critical thinking and active listening should be practiced to advocate for clients in need. It is important to gather information and analyze it from an unbiased observation without prejudice. Social workers should be organized and possess professional commitment. Cultural competence is important when working with diverse backgrounds and requires respectful responses to cultural beliefs and practice.

("List of Essential Skills and Traits for Social Workers", 2022)

Values and Ethics

Professionalism is important in every career to provide the most effective services. “The NASW Code of Ethics is a set of standards that guide the professional conduct of social workers.” (NASW). Ethics and values are strong tools to utilize to enhance and maintain the well-being of the clients one will come in contact with. Promoting social justice in cultural and ethnic diversity provides protection against discrimination, poverty, and all other forms of social injustice.

In order to provide valuable service, social workers must use their knowledge to help others address their social problems. Protecting social justice is a major challenge in social work because there is a constant change that makes situations more vulnerable to possible problems of poverty, discrimination, oppression, and injustices. Social workers should hold a strong value of dignity, integrity, and worth for their clients. Showing self-worth and respect for client culture and beliefs help ensure client cooperation and will allow them to open up more.

Part C: Reflection

Perception Before Class

I worked in Student Services for our public school system for thirteen years. I was assistant to over 30 school social workers and witnessed a lot of their professional commitment and experiences. I know social workers are dedicated and go above and beyond to ensure safety and justice for clients. I’ve listened to school social workers unload their stressful experiences of the day visiting homes of abused children, advocating for families in poverty circumstances, searching for parents of students with

truancy issues, and then go home and work all evening on documentation and loads of paperwork to present in court the next day.

Perception After Class

After completing this class, I've learned that there is more to learn and prepare mentally and emotionally to be effective in social work. Cultural diversity is one area I never acknowledged as being a part of social work. Learning cultural boundaries and practices is important because what you "think" is the solution may become disaster to the cultural needs clients and family. Cultural attitude toward mental health is an area I never took thought of in social work. I learned the importance of acculturation and community breakdown. It is important to know the culture in which you are working to provide safe and effective services and treatment.

Family/Friends Thoughts

My family has always supported my decision to major in social work. My coworkers and friends believe I would be an excellent social worker because I have experienced many similar hardships of those in need of services and I worked so closely with social workers for so long. I would sit and cry with some of the social workers as they told stories of their day's work. My heart wanted to fix every problem and when they would see my compassion and willingness to help others, in spite of diversity or difference, they would encourage me to consider social work.

Personal Values or Characteristics making it Difficult

I am a compassionate person to the extreme, especially when it comes to helpless children in need or in danger. I believe one characteristic that would make it difficult is my emotional senses may hinder my thought process in separating law from morals. I

would have to work on meditation and controlling my thoughts because I would have a difficult time overcoming the experience of watching a child suffer. My strongest value, however, would be that I believe that prayer can change things. I come from a very religious upbringing and I know that prayer and meditation are extremely beneficial.

Two Values from NASW Code of Ethics

It is important to value the **dignity and worth** of a person, especially when they don't value it themselves. If you treat clients with respect and show that you value their well-being, you will begin to break down barriers there may hinder you from any progress. I was raised to treat all people the same in spite of race, status, religion, or beliefs.

Integrity is the key to building trusting relationships with your clients. Being honest and responsible is important because your representation to your client also represents the company you work for. If clients, families, and communities can trust you and confide in you, you are promoting ethical practices for the company you represent.

I believe these are strong values I hold that will allow me to ensure my clients that I will serve them the best way possible. Putting others first doesn't take much when you have experienced both positive and negative treatment.

Problems and Benefits of Being a Social Worker

One problem of being a social worker is the stress that comes with the caseload. If a social worker does not maintain their own mental health they will not be able to uphold professionalism. Another problem being a social worker is when you don't get the results you worked for or have to accept that you could not help a client. Sometimes situations

may be too dangerous to approach and have to be turned over to authorities with more power.

One benefit of being a social worker is the ability to make a difference in someone's life. Removing a child from an unsafe environment and placing them in permanent safety would probably be more beneficial to me than having wealth. Another benefit would be being able to work with diverse cultures. Humanity is being devalued every day and causing society to lose a sense of well-being. Being a social worker gives opportunity to change lifestyles and give hope.

Conclusion

Becoming a social worker can be very rewarding, yet very stressful. In choosing a social work field, you should definitely do an inventory of what area of social work you would be more productive in. The field of social work is very broad and complex. Human diversity and cultural competence are two major outcomes in this course. Understanding the NASW Code of Ethics is critical and applying the values to your studies should be a priority.

It is a social worker's duty to protect the rights and values of humanity and restore safety and as much normalcy to any situation in a caseload. The well-being of humanity should be a priority. Social work is practice-based so you never stop learning or practicing. Empowering people and communities promotes social change and is most important in human development and cultural institutions.

Work Cited

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