

Career Profile: Social Worker Children's Service

Social workers play a crucial role in our society. They help people deal with a whole range of problems in human relations and those linked to socio-economic realities and they empower people to live productively.

The social workers who focus on children's services concentrate their attention on the children who are among the most vulnerable members of society. It is one of the specialist areas of social work. Children in our society are prey to physical, emotional, sexual and substance abuse as is evident from disturbing reports in the press. HIV/Aids has significantly increased the number of parentless homes. Some children have learning difficulties, physical disabilities or mental health problems. Often the unstable, abused child who shows aggression is regarded as a menace who should be disciplined. But to social workers s/he is damaged, perhaps frightened, lonely and depressed. It is their job to help children who are at risk and who have special needs and to organize care and support for them and their family.

Education Requirements

National Senior Certificate (NSC)

For a career in social work students are advised to select appropriate subjects suitable for tertiary study from the designated list.

Bachelor Degree

Bachelor of Social Work (4 years)

A four year degree programme that focuses on preparing social workers and is comprised of both theoretical and practical components.

Offered at:

- [North-West University](#)¹ (Faculty of Human and Social Sciences)
- [University of Limpopo](#)² (School of Social Sciences)
- [University of Pretoria](#)³ (Department of Social Work and Criminology)
- [University of the Witwatersrand](#)⁴ (School of Human and Community Development)
- [University of Venda](#)⁵ (School of Human and Social Sciences)

¹ http://www.uniwest.ac.za/faculties/hss/Schools/school_of_social_sciences.html

² http://www.ul.ac.za/index.php?Entity=School%20Main%20Menu&school_id=4

³ <http://web.up.ac.za/default.asp?ipkCategoryID=1037>

⁴ <http://web.wits.ac.za/Academic/Humanities/Umthombo/>

- [UNISA](#)⁶ (Department of Social Work)

North-West University

BA Social work (3 years)

University of Johannesburg

BA Social Work (4 years)

University of Limpopo

Bachelor of Social Work (4 years)

University of Pretoria

BSW (Bachelor in Social Work) (4 years)

University of Venda

BA (Social Work)

University of the Witwatersrand

BA (Social Work) (4 years)

UNISA

BSW (Social Work) (4 years)

Admission requirements

As admission requirements vary from one institution to another, find out what the specific requirements are by checking on the website and contacting the university if you have any queries.

Possible Employers

Public sector:

Government departments: national, provincial and local Hospitals
Rehabilitation centres
Schools

NGO (non-governmental organizations) sector:

Child and family welfare organizations
Substance abuse rehabilitation centres
Community-based organizations
Faith-based organizations

Private sector:

Industry
Health sector

⁵ http://www.univen.ac.za/human_social_sciences/social_work.html

⁶ <http://www.unisa.ac.za/Default.asp?Cmd=ViewContent&ContentID=170>

Schools
Private practice

Find out more

Find out more about social work and what it means to be a social worker:

- [Gauteng Department of Social Development](#).⁷
- [Nelson Mandela Children's Fund](#)⁸ website gives a good idea of the work being done by the fund.
- [Association of South African Social Work Education Institutions](#).⁹
- [Guidelines](#)¹⁰ for helping children affected by HIV/AIDS.

⁷ http://www.socdev.gpg.gov.za/social_work.htm

⁸ <http://www.nmcf.co.za/>

⁹ <http://www.asaswei.org.za/>

¹⁰ <http://www.etu.org.za/toolbox/docs/aids/care.html>

Are you suited to this career?

This quick quiz can help you to identify whether you are suited for this occupation.

| Quiz | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| Are you concerned about upholding the rights of the child and the family? | | |
| Are you able to communicate well with children and young people? | | |
| Are you able to cope with stressful emotional situations in your own life? | | |
| Are you good at listening to and observing people? | | |
| Are you able to organise yourself and others? | | |
| Are you a good negotiator? | | |
| Are you able to deal with difficult situations and conflict? | | |
| Do people consider you to be mature and stable? | | |
| Are you able to communicate your ideas clearly in written reports? | | |
| Are you persuasive and do people listen to you? | | |

If you have mainly yes answers it may be an indication that this is an occupation to consider.