

Care in Scotland it's life changing work

Linda Westwater-Scott,
Team Leader in a residential child care
service

"...if you care about people,
are honest, compassionate
and have love to give then
this is the job for you"

Linda has always worked in a caring role and after completing a nursery nurse course she found her way into helping those in residential child care. Read more about her role as a residential child care worker.


**What type of service
do you work in?**

I work for a voluntary organisation that provides young people a range of care from the age of 15½ to 25. I work as a team leader in a residential unit for five young people where qualified workers are available 24 hours a day.

**Have you always
worked in social
services?**

I have always worked in some form of caring capacity.





What made you choose the career you have now?

After I had completed my nursery nurse training I was offered a position with Barnardo's. At that time Barnardo's was offering young people who were living in Gogarburn hospital and who had learning and mobility challenges an opportunity to live in small groups instead of in a large hospital. I really enjoyed this job and wanted to continue to work somewhere that offered the same type of experience.

Can you tell us more about your job?

No two days are ever the same! I have the opportunity to empower young people to grow and develop in a safe and nurturing environment.

We cook, we clean, we help with laundry and we accompany young people to interviews and appointments. We are part of their reviews and hearings and write reports for any meetings that our young people are involved in.

I work an average of 111 hours over a three week period, day shifts only.

Who else is in your team?

We have a manager, three team leaders, day workers and night workers.

Do you work with other professionals in other sectors?

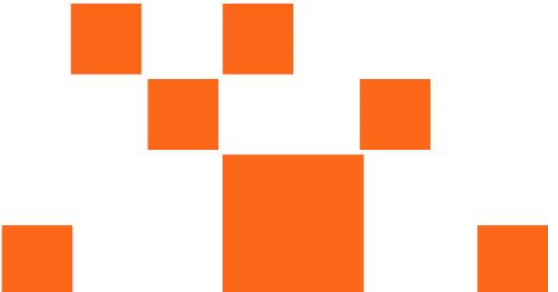
We work with criminal justice teams, social workers, teachers, psychologists, doctors, dentists and police to name a few.


What part of your job motivates you and why?

The hope that I can make a small positive difference in the lives of the young people and their families that I work with.

What are the best bits about your job?

Laughter. Young people finding something they are good at and enjoying it. Seeing them in a relationship that makes them happy. Making something in the kitchen that they enjoy. Helping them achieve their potential.





What are the challenges that you face in your job?

The young people can present with challenges such as misusing drugs/alcohol and often have anger management issues.

Young people can be mistrusting of professionals and I've found this to be especially the case as a female worker.

In what way is your career in social services rewarding?

It is very rewarding to witness how little things can make big changes in a young person's life. I enjoy seeing young people developing their skills and gaining confidence in their abilities.

Can you explain the skills and qualities you think are needed to do the role you're doing?

You need to be a caring person and enjoy what you do. Being self-sufficient, innovative and able to overcome challenges are requirements when working with young people. Being able to think outside the box is helpful. Being thick skinned and not taking some comments/actions personally is helpful. Excellent communication skills on all levels.

Has your job opened up new learning and development for you?

Yes - every day!

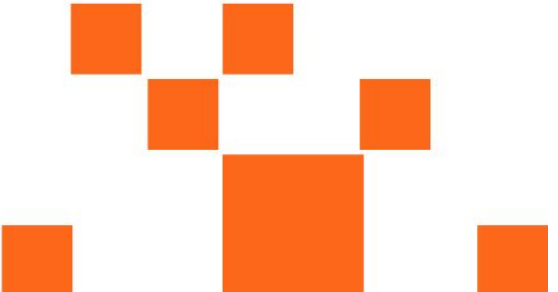
I am encouraged to participate in courses and seminars. My employers are very keen to have their staff group highly qualified for the work we do. I am always learning from the young people themselves - they teach me without realising it!

How do you see your career progressing?

I have recently become a team leader and I am currently developing my role.

What would you say to someone thinking about a career in social services?

I would say if you care about people, are honest, compassionate and have love to give then this is the job for you.





Is a career in care the career for you?

Try our interactive resource, **A question of care: a career for you** to see what a career in care is like. At the end you'll receive a detailed personal profile that tells you if you've got what it takes to join us!

You can hear from people already working in social care, early years or social work as they talk about why they love their job and what a difference they make to someone's life. And find out about the many different types of jobs and areas you can work in.

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