

# Careers in Human Growth and Development

**W**HAT DO A PRESCHOOL TEACHER and probation officer have in common? Both jobs focus on helping others learn and improve their lives, although the students/clients may be quite different. In this unit, you will learn about the range of careers included in the human growth and development field. Also, you will have the opportunity to conduct your own in-depth research to learn more about one particular career.



## Objective:



Describe careers in human growth and development.

## Key Terms:



addicts  
elderly  
homeless  
human growth and development  
infants  
mentally ill

## Human Growth and Development Careers

**Human growth and development** is a field based on helping other people. Usually people interested in this area want to make a difference in other people's lives. They tend to be people-oriented individuals who enjoy helping others.

## HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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Careers in human growth and development involve individuals or families in a variety of settings. Some jobs offer help to infants, the elderly, the homeless, addicts, the mentally ill, and the disabled. **Infants** are babies. The **elderly** are senior citizens. The **homeless** are people who live on the streets, and **addicts** are people who are abusing drugs and/or alcohol. The **mentally ill** are people who are unwell in the mind.

Human growth and development positions are available in government, non-profit, and private agencies. Positions may include direct and indirect client services. Work settings include offices, community centers, clinics and hospitals, rehabilitation centers, correctional institutions, senior citizen facilities, group homes, shelters, fitness centers, day care centers, social service agencies, and clients' homes.

There are personal rewards and challenges in this field. The focus is on helping others find safety, health, or success within their own lives. The work is vital and valid, which often is motivation for pursuing such a career. Job duties often include the development of personal and professional relationships with others.

### EXAMPLES OF JOBS

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- ◆ Child care workers manage children in a day care center or home day care facility. Day care centers may be run by governments or as private enterprises.
- ◆ Personal or home care aides work with the elderly or other people confined to their homes because of an illness or while recovering from surgery.
- ◆ Substance abuse counselors work with people with drug or alcohol abuse problems.
- ◆ Probation officers oversee adults or juveniles paroled from correctional facilities.
- ◆ Mental health workers serve people with mental health problems.
- ◆ Medical care workers serve people of all ages in managing medical problems and issues.



**FIGURE 1.** Child care workers may work in a day care center or care for children in a home.

### INVESTIGATION

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A great deal of information exists regarding careers in the human growth and development field. With proper research, you can learn about the training and education needed for each job type, from on-the-job training to advanced college degrees.



## DIGGING DEEPER...

### UNCOVERING ADDITIONAL FACTS: Educational Requirements

Educational requirements vary greatly for jobs in the human growth and development field. For example, preschool teachers may need a bachelor's degree, but aides and other workers in a day care center may need only a high school diploma. Salaries for these jobs depend on levels of education and experience.

Though the jobs may differ, many jobs in the human development field require a bachelor's degree, with classes in psychology and sociology. You would take additional courses that focus on the particular field of interest. For example, correctional treatment specialists would take criminology and criminal justice courses. Dieticians would take nutrition and biology courses, and physical therapists would take anatomy and physics courses.

Some jobs require advanced degrees or licensure. Social workers usually need a minimum of a bachelor's degree, and many jobs require a master's degree and licensure. Family therapists and psychologists may need a license that is granted only after supervised clinical experience, such as an internship.

As you conduct your research on a human development career that interests you, gather information about the educational requirements. Find out whether a bachelor's degree or advanced degree is required. Learn more about the required coursework. Which universities have highly regarded programs in that field?

### Earnings

Earnings can be diverse in this field, depending on whether it is an entry-level position or one requiring an advanced degree (e.g., a medical doctor).

### Job Prospects

Expected job prospects will vary according to the area of the country or world in which a person is working. You can research the prospects in different parts of the country, as well as the economic influences that affect the careers.

### Job Duties

Various job duties within the human growth and development field involve working closely with people. You can research which jobs would allow you to work with others and which jobs would allow you to work more independently.

### Training and Education

Many entry-level jobs are related to more advanced positions. Find out what kind of training and education is required to advance within a job category, and investigate how the advancement may improve earnings and job satisfaction.

## Summary:



The human growth and development field is an area based on helping other people. Careers in human growth and development involve individuals or families in a variety of settings. Some jobs offer help to infants, the elderly, the homeless, addicts, the mentally ill, and the disabled. There are human growth and development positions in government, nonprofit, and private agencies. Examples of jobs are day care workers, home care aides, substance abuse counselors, probation officers, mental health workers, and medical care workers.

## Checking Your Knowledge:



1. Describe the human growth and development field.
2. List four groups that may be helped by people in the human growth and development field.
3. List four settings in which human growth and development professionals may work.
4. List four examples of jobs in the human growth and development field.
5. List the educational requirements for two jobs in the human growth and development field.

## Expanding Your Knowledge:



Learn more about the outlook for human growth and development careers. Scan employment ads in your local newspaper or on an online job site. Is the field growing? Explain why or why not.

## Web Links:



### Career Information

[http://education-portal.com/articles/Career\\_Information\\_for\\_a\\_Degree\\_in\\_Human\\_Development\\_or\\_Family\\_Studies.html](http://education-portal.com/articles/Career_Information_for_a_Degree_in_Human_Development_or_Family_Studies.html)

### Career Possibilities

<http://academics.aces.illinois.edu/career-services/linking-careers/hdfs-careers>

### Human Development Careers

[http://education-portal.com/human\\_development\\_career.html](http://education-portal.com/human_development_career.html)