

DAY CARE WORKER



JOB DESCRIPTION

Day care workers care for, educate, and supervise babies and young children at play, helping them to develop and learn. In this role, you are responsible for safeguarding the children and will encourage them to develop their numeracy, language, and social skills through games, activities, and excursions. Much of the work is with children under the age of five, but some nurseries offer after-school and care for older children.



SALARY

Day care assistant ★★★★★

Day care manager ★★★★★

INDUSTRY PROFILE

Growing sector in most parts of the world due to rapidly expanding population • Wide variety of employment options, including part-time and self-employed work

CAREER PATHS

Day care workers are employed in many settings—from public- and private-sector day care centers to playgroups and children's centers—so job prospects in this sector are good. Specialized areas, such as caring for children with disabilities or learning difficulties, require more training and certification.

DAY CARE ASSISTANT You can volunteer or work as a supervised day care assistant after high school, combining on-the-job experience with studying for a degree or certificate in childcare.

GRADUATE In some states, you will be required to earn an early childhood education certification before you can begin working in a day care center.



HOSPITAL DAY CARE WORKER

Works with hospitalized children up to the age of five, caring for the needs of newborn babies or using play as a means of helping older children to cope with illness or hospital treatments.



DAY CARE WORKER Most employers encourage you to continue your professional development, with courses in areas such as child welfare and preparing young children for school. With experience, you can specialize in different types of childcare.



SKILLS GUIDE



Perseverance and patience for motivating young children to engage in play activities.



Excellent communication skills for interacting with children, parents, other carers, and day care staff.



Creativity and imagination for planning activities to stimulate the children to learn and play.



Attentiveness, empathy, and intuition to understand children's social and emotional needs.



Good observational skills to assess children and keep written reports on their development.



Good organizational skills for following health and safety rules and ensuring each child stays safe.



DAY CAMP DIRECTOR Runs summer vacation programs for day cares and other organizations, organizing activities such as sports, drama, and outings for children of all ages.



NANNY Looks after young children in a domestic setting. Nannies typically work in the home of the client family, caring for one or more children while their parents are at work.



DAY CARE MANAGER Oversees the day-to-day running and business operation of a day care center. Managers recruit staff and plan all the childcare and educational activities at the center.

RELATED CAREERS

- ▶ **CARE ASSISTANT** Supports health care professionals in hospitals, care homes, sheltered housing, and other care environments. Duties include setting up equipment and providing support to co-workers, or working directly with patients to provide routine personal care.
- ▶ **CHILDREN'S NURSE** Provides care and treatment for children under the age of 18, working with doctors, social workers, and health care assistants to assess the physical condition and needs of patients.
- ▶ **PRESCHOOL TEACHER** Teaches young children between the ages of three and five, covering subjects in the school curriculum. Jobs can be found in state or private schools.

AT A GLANCE



YOUR INTERESTS Education • Caring for children • Psychology • Sociology • Arts and crafts • Storytelling • English • Physical Education (PE)



ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS A certificate or diploma in childcare is required. A degree in early childhood education may hasten promotion in the industry.



LIFESTYLE Day care workers usually work 40 hours a week. Many centers are open from 8am to 6pm, or longer, to fit in with parents' work routines.



LOCATION In addition to day care centers, playgroups, and children's centers, day care workers can work in households as nannies.



THE REALITIES Working with children requires patience and stamina. Starting salaries are usually low, and working hours may be longer than average.