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WHEN DID YOU START AS AN APPRENTICE SOCIAL WORKER?

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WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO PURSUE A CAREER IN SOCIAL WORK?

I had done previous jobs which involved family support, and the more I learnt about being the social worker the more my interest grew. I feel very passionate about children reaching their full potential and being given the care and tools to do so.

HOW DID YOU INITIALLY ENTER THE FIELD OF SOCIAL WORK?

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WHAT WERE YOU DOING BEFORE YOU STARTED WORKING IN SOCIAL WORK?

I worked for Family solutions for around 7 years, this is a level three service who provide early help to vulnerable families. Previous to family solutions, I worked in a mother and baby unit which housed homeless teenage parents. I have also worked for SureStart.

DID YOUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES INFLUENCE YOUR DECISION TO PURSUE SOCIAL WORK? IF SO - HOW?

Absolutely, the more I worked alongside social workers the more I knew that it was a role which I really wanted to do. I would be in meetings with social workers thinking 'I want to be sat where you are.' I really enjoyed working the more complex cases and providing support to families.

HOW HAVE YOU FOUND THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING AN APPRENTICE SOCIAL WORKER?

I love it. I am really enjoying being able to hold my own cases and managing my own diary. There is no denying that it is a tough job which requires a lot of commitment and focus but it is a rewarding job where you can really make a difference to people lives.

I have been so lucky to get a permanent job in a front-line team (the team in which I did my last placement) It's face paced and exciting. I have a huge amount of support and feel very lucky.

CAN YOU WALK US THROUGH SOME OF YOUR DAILY TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

I am in the assessment and intervention team. This is the 'front door' to children's services. Once every four weeks I am on duty, this means that as part of a pod I am responsible for triaging cases that get referred in. Being on duty can also include attending strategy meetings and joint visits with the police. I will pick up cases on my duty week.

When I am not on duty, I am carrying out assessment visits which means that I will be visiting families in their home or seeing children/young people at school to gather information which informs the assessment and supports with making decisions moving forward.

I have to write up assessments, liaise with other professionals and deal with any emergency situations which may arise.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST REWARDING ASPECT OF YOUR CAREER IN SOCIAL WORK SO FAR?

I supported a mum and her 3 year old son to leave an environment where domestic abuse was a factor. Mum reported to being constantly controlled and sexually assaulted. This mum and son are now safe in refuge.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND AN APPRENTICESHIP IN SOCIAL WORK TO SOMEONE CONSIDERING IT?

Yes! Social work is an amazing career with multiple opportunities, the social work role is incredibly varied and there are a number of different teams and aspects for you to choose to work in.