



BUILDING MY PERSONAL BRAND FOR SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

Component 2: Assignment (Report)



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Introduction

This report explores the role of a Children's Support Worker, examining the responsibilities, required skills, and professional expectations associated with supporting young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD); evaluating my own skills, experiences, and areas for development through reflective tools such as SWOT analysis and Gantt-Style Timeline. Additionally, the report considers strategies for building a personal brand, professional identity, and networks, and outlines an action plan for achieving competence and career progression, guided by relevant child development and career theories.

1. Job description of the selected job

The role I have chosen is Children's Support Worker, advertised by *Healthy Careers* in Waltham Abbey (Healthy Careers, 2025). The position involves working as a *Therapeutic Parent* in a children's residential home supporting young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD). The role focuses on promoting children's emotional, behavioural, and developmental wellbeing while maintaining their safety and stability.

The organisation places high value on practitioners who demonstrate compassion, resilience, and patience, as these qualities are essential for establishing trusting relationships with vulnerable children. Equally important is a firm commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, which underpins all aspects of practice. The role is informed by attachment theory, which highlights the significance of secure early relationships in supporting emotional development, social competence, and behavioural regulation (Bowlby, 1969; McLeod, 2025). Several children in residential care have experienced disrupted attachments or trauma, which can negatively impact their development and behaviour. Therefore, adopting a therapeutic, trauma-informed approach enables practitioners to interpret behaviours as communication, rather than misconduct, supporting emotional recovery and self-esteem.

Additionally, the role aligns with the Children Act 1989, which prioritises the child's welfare, and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2018), emphasising multi-agency collaboration. By working closely with the care team, the Children's Support Worker supports resilience, trust, and positive long-term developmental outcomes. This role therefore offers the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of children who require support, guidance, and stability.

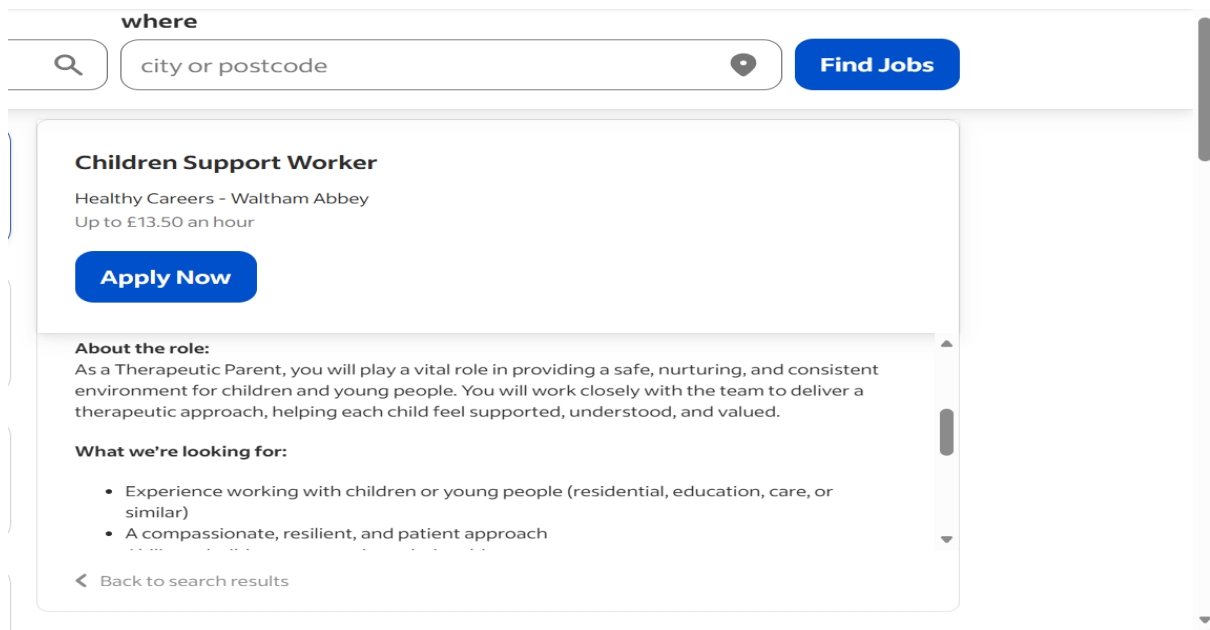


Figure 1. Screenshot of Children Support Worker role from LinkedIn.

2. Analyse the skills needed for the job and assess your skills and experience.

The Children Support Worker role advertised by Healthy Careers requires a wide range of skills to deliver effective care and support for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD). The key skills include emotional and behavioural support, applying a therapeutic approach, working collaboratively within a care team, building trusting relationships, proving compassion and resilience, and ensuring the safeguarding and welfare of children. In addition to skills, the role requires relevant qualifications, such as a Health and Social Care degree or equivalent, and behaviours aligned with professional standards, including reliability, integrity, empathy, and accountability (Healthy Careers, 2025).

Key Employability Skills

Effective communication is essential for building relationships with children, families, and colleagues. For example, during my voluntary placement with the British Red Cross at the hospital, I supported a vulnerable patient who became anxious and distressed. Using emotional intelligence and active listening, I reassured the patient and provided calm guidance to de-escalate the situation. Applying the STAR model (Situation: patient distressed; Task: provide reassurance; Action: calm, empathetic communication; Result: patient felt safe), I observed how effective communication positively influences outcomes in care settings (Care Learning, 2025). This shows how effective communication and emotional intelligence support positive outcomes in care settings.

Resilience and patience are essential for managing challenging behaviours and high-pressure situations in residential care. My experience as a parent has strengthened my patience and ability to provide consistent emotional support, while my previous role as a bar manager enhanced my resilience under pressure and developed leadership skills. Research shows that resilience mediates the effects of stress and secondary traumatic stress among residential care staff, supporting psychological wellbeing and enabling the delivery of high-quality care (Milne et al., 2024). This resilience also allows me to guide colleagues effectively, model coping strategies, and demonstrate leadership within a multidisciplinary care team.

Working collaboratively with a multidisciplinary care team is essential for implementing a therapeutic approach. My management experience enabled me to lead, coordinate, and collaborate effectively to achieve shared goals. For example, during a team meeting in my voluntary placement, I contributed ideas for patient care plans, demonstrating effective collaboration and leadership skills aligned with the Core Skills Framework (Care Learning, 2025).

Applying a therapeutic approach and safeguarding practices is essential. My degree in Health and Social Care provides theoretical knowledge of child development, trauma-informed care, and safeguarding protocols, which I applied during voluntary placements to ensure vulnerable service users were supported in a safe, nurturing environment. For example, I observed and reported potential safeguarding concerns during hospital shifts, ensuring proper follow-up and adherence to safeguarding procedures (Barker et al., 2024).

Effective record-keeping and using digital tools for communication and reporting are crucial in health and social care roles. For example, I keep correct notes and use care management software during my voluntary placement, ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuity of care. This skill aligns with the NHS Values framework, emphasizing accountability and high-quality care delivery (Department of Health and Social Care, 2023).

3. Evaluate Your Own Skills

Reflecting on my current skill set against the Children's Support Worker role enabled me to identify strengths, limitations, and development areas. I used a SWOT analysis as a self-assessment tool. My strengths include resilience, patience, compassion, effective communication, and leadership, developed through voluntary work, parenting, and managerial experience. These skills allow me to manage challenging behaviour, support emotional development, and collaborate with colleagues.

Limitations were identified in public speaking, professional confidence in team settings, and behaviour management under pressure. To address these, I plan to engage in staff mentoring,

reflective practice, and professional development courses. My opportunities include online safeguarding and child development modules, trauma-informed practice CPD, and networking within H&SC forums. Potential threats include travel distance, competitive job markets, and emotionally challenging situations, which may impact professional growth if not managed proactively.

A skills audit and reflective tools, such as Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988), supported critical self-analysis. One of my core competencies is empathetic communication, essential when supporting children with EBD. During my voluntary hospital placement, I reassured anxious patients and provided guidance, with supervisors noting my "calm manner and ability to connect quickly," which reinforced my confidence. A challenge is that emotionally intense interactions sometimes leave me drained, highlighting a need to strengthen emotional resilience further.

One of my strongest competencies is empathetic communication, which is essential for supporting children with emotional and behavioural difficulties (Healthy Careers, 2025). During my voluntary placement at a hospital with the British Red Cross, I assisted vulnerable service users by providing emotional reassurance, clear communication, and guidance. A supervisor commented on my "calm manner and ability to connect quickly," which strengthened my confidence. However, a challenge associated with this strength is that emotionally intense interactions sometimes leave me drained, indicating a need to build further emotional resilience.

My organisational skills, time management, and record-keeping support safeguarding and consistent care delivery. However, during a care-home shadowing placement, I hesitated when setting boundaries for a distressed patient. Applying Gibbs' (1988) reflective stages enabled me to recognise that clearer communication and faster intervention could have de-escalated the situation, informing my plan to pursue additional de-escalation and trauma-informed practice training.

Feedback from lecturers and mentors has highlighted my strengths in written communication and reflective thinking, which contribute to high-quality documentation and professional growth. However, I have been encouraged to take part more actively during group discussions, an essential skill for multidisciplinary collaboration within H&SC practice (NHS England, 2023).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs helps explain my motivation for continuous development. I see myself positioned within the "esteem" and "self-actualisation" stages, driven by a desire to grow professionally and make a meaningful contribution to children's wellbeing. Viewing my skill gaps through this lens allows me to approach them as practical goals rather than shortcomings.

Overall, my interpersonal strengths, resilience, voluntary care experience, and reflective mindset provide a solid foundation for the Children Support Worker role. I remain committed to strengthening behaviour-management skills and group communication through training, supervision, and ongoing reflective practice.

5. Building a Personal Brand and Professional Identity

In the Health and Social Care (H&SC) sector, establishing a strong personal brand and professional identity is essential to stand out in a competitive job market. My personal values such as compassion, resilience, integrity, and a commitment to safeguarding, align with the core principles of the sector. Moreover, I prioritise treating individuals with dignity, providing consistent support, and advocating for their wellbeing, reflecting professional guidance for social care workers (Care Learning, 2025).

To promote myself, I use a combination of tools including a tailored CV, an active LinkedIn profile, and an online portfolio documenting my academic achievements, voluntary work, and certifications. For example, my LinkedIn profile highlights my Health and Social Care degree, voluntary placement with the British Red Cross, and relevant training such as first aid and safeguarding. I regularly participate in H&SC discussion groups, and connect with professionals in residential care, building visibility and credibility within the sector.

My unique selling point (USP) is the combination of practical experience, academic knowledge, and personal qualities. I demonstrate empathy and patience as a parent, resilience from earlier managerial roles, and a strong reflective practice habit, which enables me to analyse and improve my care delivery continuously. This blend allows me to approach challenging situations calmly while mentoring colleagues and fostering trust with service users; skills highly valued in residential children's care settings (Healthy Careers, 2025).

Professional networks are integral to career development. I plan to engage with organisations such as the Royal College of Nursing, LinkedIn H&SC groups, and voluntary forums. Using Social Capital Theory, I recognise that meaningful relationships within professional networks enhance access to knowledge, opportunities, and support, increasing career growth and visibility (Woolcock, 2004, pp. 1209–1211). However, networking can be challenging due to limited confidence, time constraints, and restricted access. To overcome this, I will attend professional development events and gradually build confidence through reflective practice and mentoring.

Additionally, Holland's Theory of Career Choice informs my approach by emphasising the importance of aligning career decisions with my values and personality, which supports long-term motivation and job satisfaction within the health and social care sector (Holland, 1997).

My LinkedIn profile will maintain a professional approach with a clear profile picture, headline highlighting my H&SC role, and a summary demonstrating my USP. I will post reflections, share professional insights, and engage with H&SC news, showcasing commitment, thought leadership, and continuous learning. Combining personal values, visibility, and professional networking will establish a credible and distinctive presence within the sector.

4. Action Plan and Timeline

To achieve my career goal of becoming a competent and confident Children Support Worker, I have developed a structured action plan, using Gantt-Style Timeline to close current skill gaps, build professional expertise, and enhance my employability. This plan integrates short-term and long-term objectives, clear activities, resources, and a timeline, guided by SMART goals and Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory, which emphasises that belief in one's ability enhances motivation and skill acquisition (Bandura et al., 1999).

Gantt-Style Timeline

Activity / Goal Months	1-3 Months	4-6 Months	7-12 Months	13-18 Months	19-20 Months	25-36 Months
Completing CPD courses on de-escalation and trauma-informed practice to improve confidence in managing challenging behaviours.						
Engaging in online safeguarding and child development modules.						
Participating in multidisciplinary team meetings and maintaining reflective journals during voluntary placements to develop collaboration, documentation, and people skills.						
Applying for Children's Support Worker roles with a tailored CV, LinkedIn profile, and professional references.						

Joining professional networks such as the Royal College of Nursing to increase visibility, knowledge, and career opportunities.						
Engaging in staff mentoring schemes and reflective practice sessions to support team development.						

Legend: = Active period of activity or focus

Theoretical Application.

The action plan incorporates evaluation and reflection, ensuring that progress is monitored, and strategies are adapted as required. For example, completing reflective journals after team meetings and CPD sessions will allow me to assess improvements in communication, leadership, and behaviour management skills. Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory informs this approach, highlighting that confidence in skill development positively impacts motivation and learning outcomes. Additionally, the SMART goals framework ensures objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (MindTools, 2023), supporting structured and accountable skill development.

By implementing this action plan, I aim to systematically address skill gaps, strengthen my professional profile, and position myself to excel as a Children's Support Worker. Continuous reflection will allow me to adapt strategies, enhance competence, and provide high-quality, compassionate care to children with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the role of a Children's Support Worker requires a combination of emotional intelligence, resilience, practical experience, and theoretical knowledge to support young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties effectively. Through this report, I have explored the responsibilities and expectations of the role, analysed the essential skills required, and critically evaluated my own competencies using reflective tools such as SWOT analysis, skills audits, and Gibbs' Reflective Cycle.

This process has highlighted my strengths in empathy, patience, communication, and leadership, while identifying areas for development, including public speaking, behaviour management, and professional confidence.

Additionally, building a personal brand, professional identity, and networks has been recognised as crucial for career progression, guided by Social Capital Theory and Holland's Career Choice Theory. By implementing a structured action plan underpinned by Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory and SMART goals, I am committed to continuous development, ensuring I can provide safe, compassionate, and high-quality care, while achieving long-term professional growth within the health and social care sector.

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