

## Abstract

**Title:** Socialworkers experiences of challenges and coping strategies used in work with children and youth in social services

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**Key words:** challenges, coping strategies, child welfare social workers.

The purpose of this study was to investigate how child welfare social workers in social services experienced challenges in their work. A qualitative method was used in the study in which three people were interviewed. The results were analyzed with content analysis. The theoretical frameworks included coping theory, stress theory and Sence of Coherence (COS). Furthermore was the terms of compensation strategies, requirements-reducing strategies, voice and exit used.

The results showed that social workers have a tough and challenging working situation that is psychosocial stressful. High workload, recruitment difficulties and high staff turnover was recurring. Positive aspects of the work was mentioned poorly. A number of coping strategies were used among the social workers; e.g., to emotionally shut themselves off from work when the situation was too difficult to handle or to resign from work or work overtime during lunches and breaks. Organizational and personal factors affected the respondent's experience of the work.