

An Introduction to

# HUMAN SERVICES

Ninth Edition

Marianne Woodside  
Tricia McClam





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An Introduction to

# HUMAN SERVICES

Ninth Edition

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# PREFACE

In writing the earlier editions of this book, our goal was to offer students and human service educators a textbook choice devoted entirely to human services—not psychology, sociology, or social work. We addressed the definition of the term *human services* in its broadest sense and described a variety of clients, the generalist human service professional, and the interaction between helper and client. We approached human services as a profession that continues to grow and develop. Although our goals have essentially remained the same for this ninth edition of *An Introduction to Human Services*, we have made major revisions to the book that reflect the changing world of human services and the clients that human service professionals serve.

Our revisions are based upon the feedback we received from faculty and students. Many other revisions resulted from our own research and teaching; they document the changing face of the environment in which human services are delivered. Finally, we were guided by the changes that are occurring in our world, such as the shifting demographics, the periods of economic turmoil, the emergence of new client groups, the increasing importance of the global community, and ever-developing technologies. Throughout the text we emphasize and address the cultural dimensions of human services and clients.

## FEATURES

Three features of the textbook, its introductory nature, the use of case studies and first-person accounts, and helping students engage in the material, remain. The textbook continues to be *introductory* rather than encyclopedic. It presents the basic information that future helping professionals need to know about the human service field and provides the foundation for the further study of helping techniques, different client populations, emerging human problems, and the ethical dilemmas that inevitably occur. We believe the inclusion of resources for further study is also beneficial, given how rapidly changes occur in our world. We hope the resources here will be useful tools to help students expand their worldview, appreciate different cultural perspectives, and reflect on the knowledge and skills they are acquiring.

The use of case studies and first-person accounts reflects our commitment to what students think and how they learn. Our own students, as well as students we meet across the country, tell us how much they like case studies, short vignettes, and other illustrations.

In addition, as we support student engagement with the text material, we have enhanced the text in two additional ways. First, we have added Class Discussion activities that students can work with as individuals, in small groups, or in class, to learn more about the concepts in the chapters and to apply what they are learning.



We think this ninth edition retains the best of previous editions, while addressing the dynamic world of human service delivery. We hope to hear from you about your experiences with this edition.

## THE NINTH EDITION

We would like to highlight salient features and revisions to this ninth edition of the text that we believe will enhance student learning about human services and human service delivery.

### Reorganization of the Text

One of the major revisions of the text is its reorganization. To emphasize the professional nature of human services, there are now four parts to the text, rather than three: Defining Human Services; Guiding Human Service Practice; The Practice of Human Services; and Working in the Human Service Field. Part III is newly configured to integrate service delivery (models and the helping process) directly with the clients who seek help with problems. Part IV is a new addition to the text and directs student attention to the environment in which human services occur and the realities and challenges of human services.

In response to suggestions from human service educators, we reordered the chapters. In previous editions, we introduced students to the history of human services early in the text and we continue to do so. We moved the chapter on ethical considerations earlier to help students understand its importance to human service work. Chapter 10, Human Services Today, previously Chapter 3, now concludes the text and offers students an opportunity to integrate what they have read and learned about human services with current and future trends.

Finally, there are now 10 chapters, rather than 9, reflecting the addition of a new chapter (Chapter 5) on the importance of multicultural considerations to the profession today and the work with diverse clients.

### Contents of the Chapters

Part I, Defining Human Services, introduces the world of human services and the human service professional. This allows students to begin early in the term to answer two questions, “What is human services?” and “What does a human service professional do?” Answering these two questions helps ground the student firmly in the professional work. The focus of Chapter 1 continues to be the principles that define human services. We revised the case of Almeida and baby Anne to better represent the human service delivery system and climate that exists today. Chapter 2 explores the identity of the human service professional.

Part II, Guiding Human Service Practice, provides students with a foundation of a history of advocacy, ethical practice, and multicultural helping. We believe that these three concepts are critical to understand before the day-to-day realities of helping and delivering care can be undertaken. Chapter 3 traces the history of human services through the lens of advocacy and presents an integration of human services into a long-standing historical context with developments to the present time. Chapter 4 focuses on the ethical issues that permeate human service work. Chapter 5, The Multicultural Dimensions of Helping, is a new chapter that traces the history and rationale for attending to clients and their cultures during the helping process.

Part III, *The Practice of Human Services*, focuses the student on understanding models of service delivery, the helping process, and the client involved in the delivery of care. Chapter 6 includes a revised model of service delivery and presents a case study that introduces students to the use and abuse of prescription drug pain relievers across three models of service delivery. The human service model is expanded to include a wellness and strengths perspective, an approach that we believe captures the spirit and commitment of human services.

Chapter 7 focuses on the helping process and provides some new ideas for integrating help within a cultural context. Motivational interviewing, crisis intervention, and resolution-focused brief therapy illustrate the helping strategies used by human service professionals. Chapter 8 concludes Part III by identifying the client(s) and describing six perspectives that expand the multiple ways to view issues the client encounters. In this chapter, the reader meets many clients who are facing various challenges.

Finally, in this edition, Part IV, *Working in the Human Service Field*, ends the text in a very different way. We focus on the environment in which human services occurs as we introduce the student to the complex world of agency practice and community needs. Students begin to see themselves beyond their work with clients and as part of a larger human service delivery system. Chapter 9 reviews the environment in which human service delivery occurs and presents practical information about organizations, missions, and job descriptions. This emphasis on the agency setting includes a description of the day-to-day challenges of human service delivery. The text concludes as students view aspects of the current work in human services and begin to understand where and how they might look for changing needs and vulnerable populations. Chapter 10 examines the influences on human services today: technology, the international dimension, the changing workforce, and diversity. This chapter reflects the impact that these influences continue to have on human services. Unfortunately, many of the current challenges remain unresolved at this writing.

### Emphasis on Advocacy and Social Justice

All of the chapters in the text emphasize a commitment to advocacy and social justice. In Chapter 1, a new section on social justice provides a foundation for human service work. The history of human services is described through a perspective of advocacy in Chapter 3. Social justice and its importance is emphasized in the discussion of client rights, self-determination, and professional competence in Chapter 4. The contents of a new Chapter 5, *Multicultural Dimensions of Helping*, is based upon the need for a professional commitment to advocacy and social justice.

The public health model, described in Chapter 6, provides an excellent example of how the Centers for Disease Control and the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General conduct an advocacy campaign for medical and behavioral health practitioners to educate themselves about the harmful use and abuse of prescription pain relievers and safe ways for patients and clients to use multiple treatments to address short-term and chronic pain. Within the helping process in Chapter 7, professionals may use culturally sensitive ways to approach clients that respect their culture and empower them to use their strengths. Chapter 8 focuses on clients and four perspectives that support advocacy and social justice. Viewing clients from a wellness, strengths, environmental, and/or power-related feminist perspectives allows helping professionals to identify strengths clients have and barriers they face. Chapter 9

introduces the professional settings of human service delivery: agencies and organizations and the community. Community organizing is based on the needs of clients and helping clients advocate for themselves. Chapter 10, *Human Services Today*, concludes the text by suggesting some innovative ways that human service is being delivered today and anticipated areas where advocacy and social justice will be needed in this next decade.

### Emphasis on Multicultural Helping

A new chapter to the text, Chapter 5, *Multicultural Dimensions of Helping*, appears in the ninth edition of *An Introduction to Human Services*. In previous editions, we used an infusion model to approach teaching about the importance of culture and human service delivery. Although we emphasize the influence of culture throughout the text, we also added a chapter that helps students understand the concept of cultural competence and how to begin to develop it. Included are the history and rationale for multicultural helping as well as relevant concepts such as culture, assimilation, acculturation, worldview, race, ethnicity, discrimination, and white privilege. In this chapter, students explore the concept of cultural identity and consider how their own cultural identity may influence the way they view the world and the way they might help clients.

We continue in other chapters to emphasize international and multicultural dimensions of human service delivery. This includes revisions to Almeida's case in Chapter 1, an introduction to World Bank efforts to understand and address the issues of individuals and families forcibly displaced in Chapter 9, and a new case study of Jo Ann, a foreign student from Vietnam in Chapter 7. Many of the cases in the text were revised to capture the multicultural characteristics of helpers, clients, and the helping process.

### New and Revised Case Studies

New case examples have been added to several chapters, and many that appeared in previous editions have been updated with relevant new information. Case studies now reflect the current context in which human service occurs. For example, in Chapter 6, *Models of Service Delivery*, the case of the current opioid prescription drug epidemic illustrates the medical, public health, and human service model. Students are able to see how this one issue is addressed, based upon the history and philosophy of each model. The final case of Susan and Ted describes the complexities of serving clients and illustrates how the three models of service delivery are integrated. In fact, the case describes problems so complex that use of all three models of service delivery must be integrated to address all of their problems.

### Current Trends

Additional revisions focus on three dimensions of human services: current trends and issues, service delivery, and development of the profession. The changes of each of the three dimensions are integrated into the text and cases to present a holistic picture of a dynamic field.

Current trends and events also framed revisions to each chapter. Human service delivery exists within a political, economical, and social context that is continually changing. For example, to capture these new trends, we moved now Chapter 10,

Human Services Today, to the end of the text. This move allowed us not only to present a view of current trends and vulnerable populations but also to make a case for a life-long commitment to professional growth and development in a dynamic environment. We also revised the now Chapter 3, The History of Advocacy in Human Services, to reflect the importance of presidential leadership and capture the important legislation linked to presidential terms. We described the changing workplace and outlined how these changes create challenges for human service agencies and clients served.

A number of changes relate to service delivery. Included are evidence-based practice and its influence on human services, an expanded focus on strengths-based practice (as a part of the human service model), and the importance of outreach and advocacy.

We also revised the various perspectives from which students might view clients. Revisions of the concept of lifespan development and considerations of client issues and challenges enrich views of client problems. In addition, a wellness model, a strengths model, and the integrated environmental model with a feminist perspective expand ways to consider problems.

Finally, we continue to expand the commitment and definition of the human service profession by including work of the National Organization for Human Services, the Council for Human Service Education, and the Human Service Board-Certified Practitioner. Moving The Human Service Professional (now Chapter 2) to Part I of the text emphasizes how important understanding professional work is to defining human services. Reorganization of the chapter describes how values and personal characteristics of the helper influence the helping process. Updated information from the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, the expanded section on nonprofessional helpers, and the role of the cultural broker further support for the human service professional.

## Support for Learning

The chapters in this edition have been revised and updated with a new chapter structure, the latest information, new case examples, and more. The chapter structure includes an expanded set of goals at the beginning of the chapter and revised “Self-Assessment” section at the end of each chapter to help students measure their comprehension after reading. A “Want to Know More?” section, also at the end of each chapter, provides students with resources for further study. We revised the content and format of the Web exploration boxes to help students find the most current sites that describe the topics relevant to the text material and to bring this exploration into class discussions. In each chapter, we added figures that help students master concepts and help them organize their thinking about those concepts. Finally, the revised “Key Terms” and “References” sections ensure that students are learning from the most current material in the discipline.

## MINDTAP

MindTap®, a digital teaching and learning solution, helps students be more successful and confident in the course—and in their work with clients. MindTap guides students through the course by combining the complete textbook with interactive multimedia, activities, assessments, and learning tools. Readings and activities engage students in learning core concepts, practicing needed skills, reflecting on

their attitudes and opinions, and applying what they learn. Videos of client sessions illustrate skills and concepts in action, while case studies ask students to make decisions and think critically about the types of situations they'll encounter on the job. Helper Studio activities put students in the role of the helper, allowing them to build and practice skills in a nonthreatening environment by responding via video to a virtual client. Instructors can rearrange and add content to personalize their MindTap course, and easily track students' progress with real-time analytics. And, MindTap integrates seamlessly with any learning management system.

## ANCILLARIES

Cases from the eighth edition of *Introduction to Human Services: Cases and Applications* are referenced in the "Case Study" section at the end of each relevant chapter as an additional reading resource. The text provides students with a series of cases in a workbook format, asking them to engage in critical thinking and case evaluation.

A suite of instructor's resources is available to help faculty prepare for the course and can be downloaded from the Instructor Companion site. These include the following:

- An Instructor's Manual with chapter objectives, summaries, and outlines; critical thinking questions that assist in reading, reviewing, and applying concepts; activity suggestions for use in class; and correlations of National Organization for Human Service (NOHS) and Human Service-Board Certified Practitioner (HS-BCP) standards to the chapters.
- Accessible PowerPoint® Lecture slides for each chapter with concept coverage and key terms directly from the book.
- And a test bank of multiple choice questions for each chapter available via Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero®, a flexible, online system that allows you to create tests online, use your favorite questions from the provided test bank and add your own questions, and deliver tests via your Learning Management System (LMS), in your classroom, or wherever you want.

## FINAL WORDS

We approach each new edition with curiosity and enthusiasm. After several revisions, we find the research and writing provide us with a measure of how quickly the field of human services changes and evolves. There are some bedrock principles such as values and history that guide our practice. But, as sure as those principles are, changing contexts and client needs challenge us to develop and learn new ways to approach defining human service and describing clients, helpers, and the helping process. We hope that the ninth edition of *An Introduction to Human Services* provides you with a foundation from which to understand and practice in the helping professions.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many friends and colleagues have contributed both to our growth as human service educators and to the writing of the ninth edition. We are particularly grateful to our colleagues at the National Organization for Human Services and the Council for

Standards in Human Service Education for their support, feedback, and contributions throughout the years. We would especially like to thank our students and the students in other programs throughout the country who use our book, for we have learned much from them about human services. Introductory students continue to be a favorite group for us to teach because of their enthusiasm and interest in the helping professions.

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*Marianne Woodside  
Tricia McClam*



# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Involvement in human services as practitioners and instructors for the past 45 years brings us a commitment to and understanding of human services. From our years as practitioners in public schools and in rehabilitation settings, we gained an understanding of helpers' commitment to their clients, their work, and their professions. For the past 25 years, we conducted in-depth interviews with practitioners and clients in an effort to better understand the methods of delivering services, the interaction between clients and human service professionals, and the changing context of service delivery.







Louise Gubby/Getty Images

*Human Services at Work*

## Questions to Consider

- What are the perspectives for defining human services?
- How has human services evolved during the past 75 years? What factors influenced its development?
- What are helpers like? What are the different ways of categorizing professionals who deliver human services?
- How do human service professionals provide services to those who want them, need them, or both?

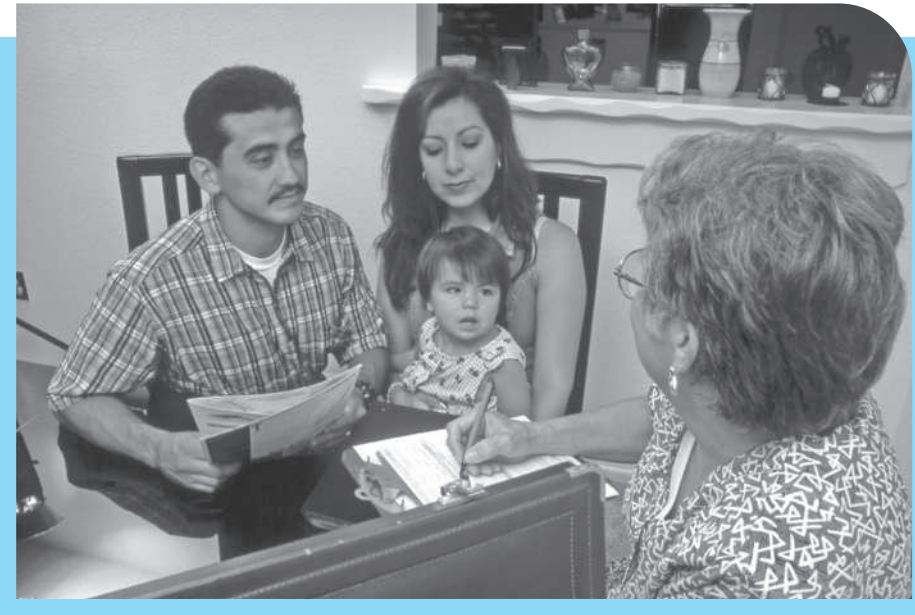
Human services may be a question mark to you as you begin this book. It is a difficult concept to define. Some think of it as the professional activities of helpers who try to meet the needs of people. Others think of local and state agencies that are named *department of human services*. Still others consider human services a **profession** for which a person receives special education and training. We present human services as a professional approach to helping individuals, families, and communities address their unique needs. A focus on how to provide a wide variety of services and how to address social justice issues through advocacy has been included.

Part I is titled “Defining Human Services.” If you think of human services as a puzzle, the chapters in this part will provide you with the pieces necessary to understand this complex concept. Each piece will give you a different perspective from which to consider human services. Chapter 1 introduces Almeida, a client who needs help from the human service delivery system. Through Almeida’s experience, this chapter examines both scholarly and professional definitions.

Chapter 2 introduces the human service professional as a provider of human services, with an examination of helpers’ motivations, values, and characteristics. It also provides an overview of the categories of human service professionals and insights about them. The chapter concludes with a description of the roles and responsibilities of human service professionals.

# AN INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN SERVICES

## CHAPTER 1



Tony Freeman/PhotoEdit

*Family Receiving Help and Support*

### After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

#### Themes and Purposes

- LO 1-1** Identify the themes and purposes of human services.
- LO 1-2** Define problems in living, and illustrate how individuals experience these problems.
- LO 1-3** Relate the growing number of problems in the modern world to the needs of clients, families, and communities.
- LO 1-4** Identify the aspects of self-sufficiency and the barriers to achieving it.
- LO 1-5** Compare the functions of social care, social control, and rehabilitation.

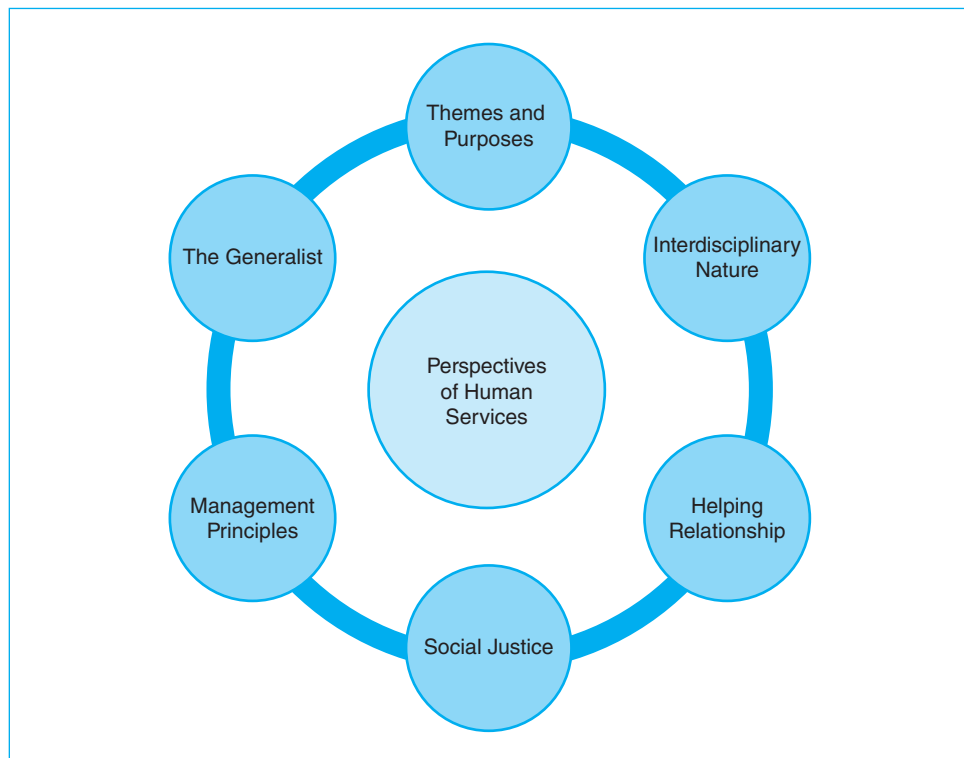
#### The Human Service Profession

- LO 1-6** Apply the contributions of sociology, psychology, and anthropology to the human service profession.
- LO 1-7** Identify four tasks that human service professionals perform during the helping process.

- LO 1-8** List the abilities of human service professionals that enhance the helping relationship.
- LO 1-9** Define the term *social justice*, and explain why it is an important concept for human service professionals and their clients.
- LO 1-10** Name the three characteristics of human service teams.
- LO 1-11** Summarize the contributions of case management to human service delivery.
- LO 1-12** List the characteristics of the generalist approach to human services.

One of the first questions you will probably ask as you pick up this book is, “What is human services?” This question has often arisen in the past several decades as the human service field has changed and restructured. The purpose of this chapter is to help you gain an understanding of the term. The definition of *human services* is derived from six perspectives presented in Figure 1.1. Understanding and integrating these diverse perspectives will help you formulate a definition of human services. Underlying all six aspects is the work of a human service professional who addresses the unique needs of individuals, families, and communities whether through the delivery of a wide range of services or addressing the issues of social justice.

Finally, a case study of Almeida, a young mother who is living in a large city with her baby daughter, Anne, illustrates these six perspectives. Together, the perspectives presented in this chapter will help clarify what human service is. They will also provide a basic understanding that serves as a framework for the remainder of the book.



**FIGURE 1.1** PERSPECTIVES OF HUMAN SERVICES

## THEMES AND PURPOSES OF HUMAN SERVICES

LO 1-1

The themes and purposes we introduce in this section represent the scholarly literature and research in human services, the wisdom of professional human service organizations, and the voices of professionals and clients. Sources for the scholarly literature include the National Organization for Human Service publications such as *The Link* and the *Journal of Human Services* as well as bulletins and monographs published by the Council for Standards in Human Services Education. There are research manuscripts, monographs, and reports that describe client populations and programs in the human services, social work, and psychology literature. Scholars approach the definition of human services by describing the themes and purposes that guide human services; these themes and purposes have emerged over the past seven decades. Those presented in this section represent the ideas of a range of scholars writing in the field today and include concerns with problems in living, the increase in problems in our modern world, the need for self-sufficiency, and the goals of social care, social control, and rehabilitation. A case study of Almeida and her daughter, Anne, illustrates these themes.

## PROBLEMS IN LIVING

LO 1-2

Human beings are not always able to meet their own needs. Human services has developed in response to the needs of individuals, groups, or communities for assistance to live better lives. Examples of such people are often publicized in the media: the very young; older adults; people with limited physical or mental capabilities; victims of crimes, disasters, or abuse; immigrants; people with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS); veterans; and many others. Assisting such individuals is an example of the helping interaction. Families and groups also receive the attention of human service professionals, as do communities and larger geographic areas.

Anne, a one-year-old child, lives with her mother, Almeida, in a housing project. Their home is a dirty, rat-infested, one-room apartment that offers little beyond protection from the weather. Almeida, 17 years old, works six days a week for a local clothing manufacturer for minimum wage. She spends day after day in a large, hot, noisy warehouse, sewing sleeves in dresses and shirts. Almeida feels lucky to have this job, since the plant downsized twice. Most of her friends who work do so in the fast-food industry or in local supermarkets in the area. And many of her friends cannot find employment.

This summer, Luis, a 10-year-old neighbor, watches baby Anne from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Luis takes Anne to the playground each day and watches her while he plays with his friends. When she needs a nap, he puts her down to sleep on the only grassy spot. He changes her once a day at noon and feeds her a bottle of watered juice, a bottle of watered milk, and cut-up hot dogs. The playground is located in a rough neighborhood and is the hangout for one of the many street gangs in the area. Almeida leaves the house at 7:30 a.m. and does not return until 6:00 p.m. During the hours that Luis is not watching Anne, she is alone in her bed in the apartment. Almeida stays in touch with Luis by text to keep track of baby Anne. For her the phone is the first bill she pays. It is the key to her support system and care of baby Anne.

Almeida knows that she needs help for herself and Anne. Before she moved from her old neighborhood, Almeida had worked with a case manager, Barbara LaRosa. She plans to call LaRosa tomorrow from work and hopes LaRosa will be able to give her some ideas about where to go for help in this new part of the city. Almeida also visited a faith healer living near her parents' home. The healer, Morales, a *curandera*, combined prayers and an herbal treatment to calm Almeida and reduce her stress.

Baby Anne cannot take care of herself. She is one of the many individuals who require human services just to have the necessities of life. Anne lacks adequate food, housing, and developmental opportunities. She is in danger because she does not receive appropriate supervision during the day. There is also some question as to whether Almeida can take care of herself properly. She is only 17, works long hours for little pay, and has the major responsibility of raising a child, although she is little more than a child herself.

Human services recognizes problems such as Almeida's as **problems in living**. As part of this recognition, the focus is not on the past but rather on improving the present and changing the future. Doing so involves directing attention to the client, the environment, and the interaction between the two. The experience of problems in living relates to (a) the interaction of individual problems or issues, (b) issues and challenges linked to life span development, (c) problems situated in a challenging environment, and (d) difficulties that arise from social justice issues.

A continuous encounter with multiple problems in living can influence the quality of the lives of individuals and families. And, in fact, facing persistent and long-lasting challenges interferes with the ability to meet the challenges of these problems and to develop and prosper. The very existence of problems in living may create very difficult situations for clients and families, as well as those who attempt to help them. In many situations, there may exist a cycle of challenges since one problem is linked to other challenges. And, when one problem worsens, the other challenges become more difficult (Cook, Hartson, Schiemge, Jankowski, Starr, & Meek, 2016).

Poverty also influences problems in living and is influenced by them (Overholser, 2016). For instance, unemployment and living with limited financial resources create difficulties for clients and families to find housing, address food insecurity, and access medical care. In addition, an increased likelihood of psychological distress resulting in anxiety, depression, increased drug and alcohol abuse, and domestic violence is often linked to living in poverty. The lack of concrete services and a diminished psychological strength and stability contribute to a continued state of poverty since the client does not have the opportunity to secure education and/or employment.

Problems in living are also related to how individuals grow and develop through the life cycle, encountering problems in living such as adolescent rebellion, parenthood, midlife crises, caring for aging parents, and death and dying. Many difficulties in living arise in connection with families and communities; these may involve relating to children, spouses, and parents; maintaining progress in education; adapting to a new culture and language; sustaining performance at work; and assuming responsibility for the very young or the very old. An important aspect of problems in living is the difficulty individuals encounter in interacting with their environments. If unemployment is high, finding work is not easy; if friends or relatives abuse drugs and alcohol, abstaining is difficult; if parents and peers do not value education, choosing to stay in school is problematic; if the family is living in a new country and culture, adjustment is difficult; and if a natural or human disaster occurs, recovery is not easy. Human services addresses problems in living, with a focus on both the individual or group and the situation or event. These problems occur throughout the life span. This dual focus on the client and the environment strengthens the nature of the help offered and provided.

Finally, the experience of problems in living is related to issues of social justice, which we will introduce later in this chapter and discuss in more detail in Chapter 5.

For now, we note that individuals as members of marginalized and oppressed cultural groups experience discrimination and oppression and are often invisible to the dominant culture. This intensity of problems in living increases their vulnerabilities.

Anne's mother, Almeida Estrada, was 16 years old when Anne was born. Almeida attended elementary school but quit attending regularly when she was in the fifth grade. She was held back in the first grade and again in the third grade because she had not mastered basic math, reading skills, and English. Her parents, undocumented and uneducated immigrants to the United States, believed education was important but thought it was beyond them and Almeida. In fact, they spoke little English themselves. Although her father was a day laborer and her mother spent her days in the neighborhood, they were dependent on Almeida for many things, including helping them connect to their environment.

By the time Almeida was 10, she had discovered that life was more pleasant away from home. After school, she would spend long hours playing with her friends on the streets; nights, she would spend with girlfriends. She became sexually active at the age of 12 under pressure from her friends, who ridiculed her until she became "one of the gang." At the time she became sexually active, she knew about HIV/AIDS but did not understand it as a problem for her.

Between the ages of 12 and 16, Almeida was in constant turmoil, wondering how and where to live her life. She received advice as well as pressure from parents, friends, and teachers to do what they wanted. Because her parents were illegals, she lived in constant fear that they would be deported, and she would be alone. Occasionally, she was asked to join special programs at school, but her parents had to be careful that no one discovered their status, so they discouraged her participation. No one seemed particularly interested in what she wanted to do. In addition, she was entangled in a troublesome adolescence and rejected parents and teachers and accepted peers as models. Relating to peers brought unwelcome pressure to go along with the norms of the group. But she was part of a group, and that support extended beyond face-to-face contact to texting and talking by phone. This way of communicating put her further from her parents' reach.

In responding to the needs of clients, human service professionals are encountering an increasing number of problems to be solved, a rise that many experts attribute partly to a changing culture and lifestyle. This broad increase in the problems clients face is another theme in human services.

## THE GROWING NUMBER OF PROBLEMS IN THE MODERN WORLD LO 1-3

Human services has emerged in response to the growth in human problems in our modern world. A growing number of people feel alienated and isolated from their neighborhoods and communities. No longer can they count on family and neighbors to share everyday joys and sorrows and assist in times of trouble and crisis. Households are in constant transition, as people leave family and friends to seek new job opportunities. Schools, religious organizations, and recreation centers still provide meeting places, but because of the constant turnover, newcomers are welcoming newcomers. Stress is a hallmark of today's world. We worry about how to feed, clothe, and shelter children, families, adults, and the elderly. Illiteracy, a lack of employable skills, and unemployment rates or low-wage employment add to people's feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, particularly in a technological age.

The lifestyles that were once ensured with a good education and a robust economy are no longer guaranteed. The economic downturn or recession that began in 2008 exacerbated the difficulties individuals are experiencing today. After this



downturn, individuals, families, and communities continue to struggle with the new economic realities, and many have lost hope for education and employment. The number of individuals experiencing difficulties related to the economic situation continues to increase markedly. For example, people may be trained for jobs that are being phased out or no longer exist. In addition, new technology may also cause many to lose their jobs. The shifting of the jobs within a global economy results in a changing nature of employment that threatens any promise of security. In addition, many individuals and families continue to lose their homes and their ability to afford alternative housing. They also worry about health care and how to feed and clothe their families.

The world appears smaller as we have increased our capability for global communication. As more information is available, more choices appear possible. At the same time, the problems of overpopulation, malnutrition, urbanization, the environment of the planet, natural disasters, and, as stated earlier, economic downturn are new sources of worry. There are also frequent acts of terrorism, civil wars and genocide, and religious and social conflict, as well as the threat of nuclear war that create instability and fear. And even in the United States, violence against black men, reprisals against police, threats to immigrants, and other challenges remind us daily that safety and security are difficult to find. Finally, the media bring vivid pictures of all these problems into the home through television, radio, and the Internet. Electronic communication and social media increase communications, including those related to both global issues and issues here in the United States.

For the past two years, Almeida has felt the weight of daily problems in living. When she was 16, she discovered she was pregnant, and she received this information with mixed feelings. She was familiar with the problems of pregnancy because many of her friends had been pregnant. They often discussed choices, but to Almeida there was only one choice: to have the baby and take care of it. Her parents were disappointed in her and could offer little support. She tried to seek help from a reproductive health agency but was frightened when she had to walk through a picket line of abortion protesters to get there. After her first and only visit, the agency requested she call them when she arrived so one of the staff could meet her outside and escort her into the building.

Of course, she could not expect much support from her parents, who were the only family she had. She could not expect help from the father of her unborn baby or any of the other males in her life; most were just passing through the neighborhood. She was not sure where she would live or how she would support herself.

Almeida lives in a complex world with little support. An effective human service delivery system will teach her to use the skills she needs to manage her own life and survive the difficult challenges that face her. This self-sufficiency is another theme of human services.

## SELF-SUFFICIENCY

LO 1-4

For many human service professionals, the key to successful service delivery is providing clients, or consumers of human services, the opportunity and support to be self-sufficient. Early definitions of **self-sufficiency** referred to economic self-sufficiency such as attaining employment and a stable income, but today the meaning of client self-sufficiency is broader. It relates to client strengths and a client's belief in his or her abilities to establish goals, develop plans, ask for help, and address barriers (Snyder, 2002). Hence, self-sufficiency includes a psychological state as well as a financial state. As clients become self-sufficient, they may develop a

sense of hope for the future (Snyder, 2002), a sense of self-efficacy, optimism for the future, and resilience to overcome the barriers they encounter (Gutherie, Ellison, Sami, & McCrea, 2014), all of which strengthen an individual's self-esteem. This psychological and economic stability is even more difficult to achieve in today's environment.

When individuals are able to contribute financially to meeting their own basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter, they gain a certain degree of independence and feeling of competence, but they may still need some assistance. Barriers they may experience include health and medical problems (e.g., chronic illness, drug or alcohol issues, depression), personal issues (e.g., lack of education, lack of job skills, criminal history), and related characteristics (e.g., lack of transportation, lack of available services) (Institute for Circumpolar Health Studies, 2011).

One important aspect of moving clients to self-sufficiency is to empower them to make decisions and assume responsibility for their actions. Human services is committed to giving individuals and groups sufficient assistance to allow them to help themselves. Clients are encouraged to be independent and gain control of their lives as soon as they are able. They gain belief in themselves or a sense of efficacy to make the changes needed to become self-sufficient. In Box 1.1, International Focus: Teen Pregnancy, you will read about the ways that help pregnant teens attain self-sufficiency.

### BOX 1.1

### INTERNATIONAL FOCUS: TEEN PREGNANCY

Teen pregnancy rates in the United States were once the highest among developed countries. These rates have fallen steadily during the past decade for all racial and ethnic groups, including non-Hispanic white teens, black non-Hispanic teens, and Hispanic teens. Even so, of the one million teens who become pregnant each year, approximately 80% are unintended. Whether planned or unplanned, teen mothers are more disadvantaged than are other teens and have children who face negative health, cognitive, and behavior outcomes. *Healthy People 2020*, a federal initiative to improve health in the United States, includes a goal to reduce teen pregnancy among 15- to 17-year-old and 18- to 19-year-old adolescent females (Healthy People 2020, 2013).

In developed countries, adolescent or teen pregnancy generally refers to girls younger than 18 years of age, most of whom are not married, and is considered a social issue. By contrast, teens in developing countries are often married, and the pregnancy may be accepted and welcomed. Unfortunately, in combination with malnutrition and poor health care, the pregnancy may lead to medical problems.

Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest incidence of teenage pregnancy in the world, with 143 pregnancies per 1,000 girls aged 15–19 years. Generally speaking, women

in Africa marry at much younger ages than women elsewhere and have pregnancies earlier in life. Of the 10 countries identified by Save the Children as places where motherhood carries the most risk for mother and baby, 9 were in sub-Saharan Africa.

The situation in South Asia is similar: An early marriage age means high adolescent pregnancy rates. This is truer in rural areas where knowledge and use of contraceptive methods is low. Some areas such as Indonesia and Malaysia are experiencing a decrease in the rate of early marriage and pregnancy, yet the rate remains high when compared with the rest of Asia (Save the Children, 2013).

In some areas of the world, little information is available on sexual behavior. This is the case in the Pacific Islands although teen pregnancy is considered an emerging problem.

Regardless of location or society, there are some common outcomes of teenage pregnancy. One is the higher incidence of premature birth and low birth weight. For the baby, other problems may include developmental disabilities, behavioral issues, and poor academic performance. Daughters are more likely to become teen mothers, and sons are more likely to serve time in prison. Outcomes for the mothers are lack of education, poverty, and a second child within 24 months.