

# My Fulfilling Job as a Social Worker

*Maria Irma Blanco*

The best job in my life was when I worked as a social worker in Bogotá, Colombia. I worked for a program that helped children who were abandoned to live in the street because their families were addicted to drugs. We invited the children to enter the program, which has 10 houses where they can live and learn a craft.

I loved my career because I was helping people. I picked up kids from the streets and invited them to our institution where they could live. We asked them, "What do you need? What is the solution to your problems?"

I personally attended to the children's needs. For example, I got them medical and dental appointments. I helped find important documents, like birth certificates. And I helped the children deal with the most difficult question: "Where is your family?"

My salary was very good and had all the benefits of being a government employee. My co-workers were very nice, and we had good relationships. When I finished my eight-hour day, I felt satisfaction. I knew I was helping these children have a better future. And I was growing too and learning many things.

It was difficult and sad to have to leave that job because I came to the United States with my kids. I worked for 20 years at that hard job. I dedicated myself to it, and that fulfills me.



*Maria Irma Blanco studies ESL at the Center for Immigrant Education and Training at LaGuardia Community College in Queens, NY. She has applied to college and intends to study occupational therapy.*

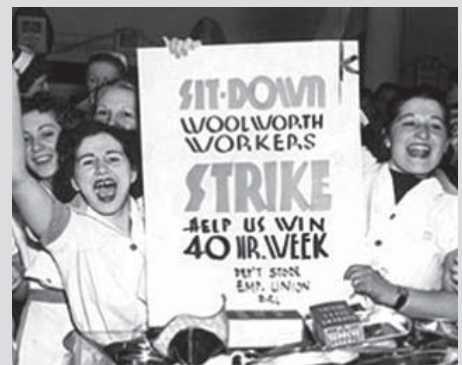
## Eight-Hour Day

**Did you know?** In 1890, when the government first tracked workers' hours, the average work week for full-time manufacturing employees was 100 hours.

**Today, an eight-hour work day** is considered normal. How do you think a 40-hour work week became the new normal? Is it, in fact, "normal" for everyone? What types of jobs or workers might not have a 40-hour work week?

**Research:** Use the internet to look up the history of the 8-hour day. Find out what today's average work week is for U.S. workers and for workers in other countries.

**Source:** [www.pbs.org/livelyhood/workday/weekend/8hourday.html](http://www.pbs.org/livelyhood/workday/weekend/8hourday.html)



*"8 hours for work, 8 hours for rest and 8 hours for what you will" was a slogan of the Eight-Hour Day movement.*