

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

**PROGRAM:** Head Start  
**JOB TITLE:** Early Intervention and Mental Health Manager  
**JOB CLASSIFICATION:** Program Specialist IV  
**PAY GRADE:** 12

### **JOB SUMMARY**

Design, plan, manage, implement, and evaluate the mental health services program for all Head Start children and design, plan, manage, and evaluate screening, assessment, identification and specialized services for children with disabilities and special needs. Establish and maintain linkages with parents, staff, community professionals, schools, and agencies, assuring compliance with multiple regulatory standards throughout. Enable parents to become advocates for their children and assist families to access needed services and/or to advocate for unavailable services. Oversee the transition of children with disabilities and special needs into and out of the Head Start program.

### **SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS**

**Reports To:** Head Start Deputy Director

**Supervises:** Early Intervention and Mental Health and Behavior Specialists

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

- Minimum of Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education, Special Education, Child Development, Psychology, Social Work, Human Services; or related field, preschool focus, preferred;
- Minimum of three years' experience in early childhood education; and,
- Minimum of three years' experience with early intervention, disabilities, special needs, and at-risk conditions.

### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

- Current PA Act 34 Criminal, Child Abuse, FBI certifications, and Sex Offender Registry check prior to hire, and a Motor Vehicle Report;
- Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse training completed within 30 days of hire;
- Physical examination prior to hire;
- Tuberculosis test prior to hire;
- Computer training and/or documented proficiency with popular word processing, spreadsheet, and database software; experience with and/or training in Microsoft Office products particularly Word, Excel, and Access is preferred;
- Valid driver's license and vehicle with adequate insurance coverage available for daily use;
- Physical ability to perform essential job functions without any health restrictions, including the ability to sit for long periods of time; stand, lift, and carry up to thirty pounds; have unrestricted use of the upper body; corrected or uncorrected hearing and vision within normal range, and a clear speaking voice; and other abilities necessary to ensure child safety in the classroom, other group areas and when in the community, such as, but not limited to, the following:
  - Ability to bend, squat, reach, kneel, and climb stairs;
  - Ability to move from a sitting to standing position quickly, safely, and without

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- difficulty;
- Ability to chase an eloping child; and,
- Nontraditional hours as needed or assigned, including evenings, weekends, and overnight travel.

**SPECIFIC DUTIES**

- ❖ Set, communicate, and implement high standards for mental health and disabilities services program-wide and serve as a leader and an expert in mental health and disabilities across all program service delivery options and grant programs; develop and/or recommend policies and procedures; oversee the implementation of approved policies and procedures;
- ❖ Engage in comprehensive, integrated short- and long-range annual, strategic, and continuous quality improvement planning with other program managers to identify and forward program goals, objectives, and services in accordance with grant applications and program plans; incorporate into ongoing planning process;
- ❖ Plan, write, monitor, and implement the mental health and disabilities services sections of the program Work Plan in collaboration with the Head Start Director and other program managers, staff, and stakeholders, including parents, Policy Council, and community;
- ❖ Assess community, program, child, and family mental health and disabilities services needs and available resources; compile and analyze data; produce reports; assist with the annual program Community Needs Assessment;
- ❖ Assist with the annual program self-assessment and federal onsite review process, focused on, but not limited to, mental health and disabilities services; report on strengths, recommendations, and required improvements; implement improvements and recommendations; incorporate into program planning process;
- ❖ Negotiate, secure, coordinate, monitor, and evaluate screening, evaluation, therapy providers, and consultants for any needed services; provide technical assistance; monitor and assure Head Start parent and staff involvement with outside professional services;
- ❖ Collaborate closely with the Health Specialist to assure compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards for mental health and disabilities services where they overlap with health;
- ❖ Participate in the hiring process and assume responsibility for all other personnel activities related to the Early Intervention and Mental Health and Behavior Specialists, including orientation, monitoring, mentoring, coaching, instruction, observation, performance evaluation, and professional development;
- ❖ Provide orientation, training, technical assistance, oversight, and monitoring of staff to implement mental health and disabilities services plans for children and their parents;
- ❖ Develop, implement, and monitor comprehensive mental health and disabilities services documentation and recordkeeping systems including automated information management systems; analyze and process information to generate meaningful records and reports of activities and outcomes to ensure compliance with regulatory timelines;
- ❖ Plan, coordinate, and evaluate the early screening of every child entering Head Start, including developmental, speech and language, and social-emotional behavioral screenings; recruit and assign staff; arrange transportation; secure screening locations; document and report results; monitor re-screening and evaluations as appropriate;
- ❖ Plan, implement, document, monitor, and evaluate the identification/verification process of children with disabilities in collaboration with staff, parents, and intermediate units;
- ❖ Review all Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for developmentally delayed children with documented disabilities; monitor timeliness of the IEP process in compliance with state due

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- process laws and all other applicable regulations; provide/secure training and technical assistance on the IEP process for staff and parents;
- ❖ Provide leadership in coordinated services delivery; and planning;
  - ❖ Ensure timely, efficient communication of disabilities services information across component lines to allow for smooth program-wide planning and operations;
  - ❖ Participate in planning, meetings, membership, activities, and recordkeeping for the School Readiness and Mental Health Advisory Subcommittee of the Health Services Advisory Committee;
  - ❖ Assess the needs of staff and parents for mental health and disabilities-related training and technical assistance in collaboration with program managers and supervisors; assist in the design and implementation of a comprehensive training and technical assistance program;
  - ❖ Develop, implement, and monitor interagency agreements with intermediate units and other agency(ies) or individuals for specialized services including individualized evaluation and therapy services;
  - ❖ Involve parents in the diagnostic process and in planning and implementing the individualized program developed to meet the child's needs; advocate for parents of children with disabilities or special needs and enable parents to enhance their own and their child's self-sufficiency and to advocate on their own behalf;
  - ❖ Plan, coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate effective transitions for children with disabilities or special needs into and out of Head Start in collaboration with intermediate units, school districts, agencies, and other community partners in collaboration with program staff; advocate for appropriate placements and parental involvement; participate in multidisciplinary team meetings for individual children;
  - ❖ Keep current with community resource developments that impact upon mental health, disability, special education, or early intervention services;
  - ❖ Serve on interagency groups representing Head Start; serve as liaison between Head Start and the larger community; engage in joint planning with community partners on collaborative projects;
  - ❖ Advocate for Head Start children and families and for improved or increased community response to early intervention, mental health, and disability services issues; promote child and adult wellness services and systems and disabilities identification and services within the wider community;
  - ❖ Advocate for the Head Start Program, its services, children, families, and staff; support and promote the Head Start Performance Standards and other standards and regulations applicable to program operations within and outside the program;
  - ❖ Maintain and improve competencies within the field of mental health, disabilities, behavioral health, and social-emotional growth and development; promote the dissemination and application of new developments with staff, parents, and the wider community;
  - ❖ Order disabilities and mental health supplies; maintain inventory;
  - ❖ Facilitate transportation of children and families to special needs services; arrange for required adaptations, if any, to routine Head Start transportation to Head Start classes;
  - ❖ Participate in a team decision-making process when a therapeutic support staff person, Behavior Specialist, or other Head Start staff is assigned to a specific child/group; collaborate with other managers/outside agency(ies) to monitor, document, supervise, and evaluate as appropriate;
  - ❖ Request reports and documentation regarding enrolled children when necessary;
  - ❖ Plan, convene, and attend meetings, trainings, and conferences as required;
  - ❖ Prepare and submit reports as required;

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- ❖ Work as a member of the Head Start team; and,
- ❖ Perform all other tasks as assigned.

**REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- ❖ Knowledge of the following:
  - Head Start Program Performance Standards for mental health, disabilities, and early childhood development, as well as all other Head Start Program Performance Standards, the Head Start Act, and other applicable regulations and early childhood quality standards;
  - Typical and atypical preschool child growth and development, especially social-emotional development and behavior;
  - Child developmental screening tools and assessments, and techniques of child observation and recording, especially behavior;
  - Disabilities in young children, and related resources and sources for additional information;
  - State and federal early intervention and due process regulations, and resources regarding children with disabilities;
  - Community resources relating to mental health and disabilities services;
  - Principles and practice of inclusion in an early childhood setting;
  - Principles and methods of adult supervision including observation, monitoring, and evaluation and collaborative improvement plan development;
  - Fiscal operations, controls, and reporting systems; and,
  - Microsoft Office Suite, including but not limited to Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, Power Point and Publisher components.
- ❖ Skill in the following:
  - Using a keyboard and personal computer;
  - Writing, editing, and communicating, including knowledge of English grammar, spelling, and punctuation as they would relate to the production of reports, work plans, and other operational documents, as well as their use in communicating with a variety of individuals and groups;
  - Command of multiple oral communication skills, such as speaking, listening, and interviewing;
  - Building and working within complex management and service delivery systems;
  - Classroom management and Positive Behavior Intervention Supports, including child behavior recording systems; and,
  - Use of tracking, monitoring and reporting systems including automated information management systems.
- ❖ Ability to do the following:
  - Take a leadership role in the establishment and maintenance of effective, collaborative partnerships with Head Start and grantee staff and parents, agencies, elected officials, government agencies, businesses, and community individuals and groups;
  - Collaborate effectively with other managers who supervise the provision of mental health and disabilities services by their staff;
  - Think and act creatively, and be resourceful and flexible;
  - Communicate effectively in writing and speaking; communicate effectively with individuals and large groups;
  - Demonstrate respect for individuals and groups with varied cultural, racial, ethnic,

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- religious, and linguistic identities or backgrounds;
- Observe early childhood environments and provide feedback;
- Soundly interpret and apply regulations and procedures;
- Implement administrative procedures and operations and evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness;
- Plan, organize, prioritize, and schedule complex multitasked and multifaceted work to accomplish program goals, and evaluate the delivery of service and program objectives within broad parameters independent of direct supervision;
- Project a positive image;
- Hire, orient, train, and evaluate supervised staff and provide technical assistance and guidance on program procedures, effective service delivery practices, regulations, laws, and strategies;
- Prepare and maintain written records and reports;
- Interpret written and oral information;
- Motivate and instruct adults and convey information to adults; and,
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.