

JOB DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM: Early Learning Program

JOB TITLE: Lead Family Advocate

JOB CLASSIFICATION: Program Specialist III-A

PAY GRADE: 9

JOB SUMMARY

Provide high-quality family engagement support services (health, mental health, nutrition, parent involvement, and social services) to the families of infants, toddlers, and preschool children enrolled in Early Learning programs. Comply with the Head Start Performance Standards, the Head Start Act, and other applicable regulations and funding source requirements. Build partnerships with families to assist them in identifying their own goals, strengths, needed services, and support systems, and in developing strategies and timetables for achieving their own goals. Direct and/or provide training and technical assistance related to family engagement to staff, parents, and community. Establish and maintain comprehensive recordkeeping and reporting systems. Collaborate with community partners and staff.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS

REPORTS TO: Deputy Director Operations & Engagement

SUPERVISES: Family Advocates

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree in social services, human services, adult education, family services, or other related field, preferably in a collaborative work environment;
- Minimum of two years of case management experience;
- Minimum of one year of supervisory experience; and,
- Minimum of one year of experience organizing, recording, and processing information, and planning, implementing, and evaluating programs or projects.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- Pennsylvania State Police Criminal History Clearance, Child Abuse Clearance, FBI Clearance, and Sex Offender Registry check prior to hire; and Motor Vehicle Record check;
- Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse training completed within 90 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,
- Nontraditional work hours, as required, including, but not limited to, evenings and weekends.

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SPECIFIC DUTIES

❖ Leading

- Set, communicate, model, and implement high standards for family engagement services;
- Develop, recommend, implement, and monitor family engagement policies and procedures to ensure full implementation of Head Start Performance Standards, other applicable laws and regulations, and funding source requirements;
- Ensure consistency and alignment across funding streams and throughout the program regarding family engagement philosophy, goals, objectives, policies, and practices in the area of family engagement;
- Develop, implement, monitor, and report on the individualized Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework process;
- Plan, implement, document, monitor, and revise as needed a comprehensive, individualized, and developmental family engagement training and technical assistance program for staff;
- Plan, implement, document, monitor, and revise as needed a comprehensive, individualized, and developmental parent training program that is responsive to parent needs, concerns, and requests, and that supports parents in their role as the primary influence in their children's lives;
- Seek to improve access and to expand the supply of community services important to local low-income families, support existing community services, and, in collaboration with partners, parents, interagency community groups and leaders, identify areas of unmet needs and recommend programmatic responses;
- Oversee parent referrals to community agencies/programs; assess accessibility, relevance, and usefulness of assistance received;
- Assume responsibility for ongoing personal growth and development;
- Model and protect the program philosophy and corporate culture; and,
- Serve as a positive role model.

❖ Planning

- Engage in comprehensive, integrated, and strategic long- and short-term planning to identify and forward program goals, objectives, and services;
- Assume a high level of responsibility for the annual program-wide self-assessment process, community assessment, and federal on-site and other monitoring reviews; report on family engagement and community partnership strengths and recommendations, and implement required improvements; incorporate those into the program planning process; and,
- Establish and maintain ongoing collaborative relationships with community organizations responsive to the concerns of pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and their families.

❖ Organizing

- Organize parent orientation to Early Learning programs in collaboration with the management team;
- Organize/supervise parent activities that support program goals, objectives, and work plans, and that provide parents regular opportunities to work together and with other community members on activities they helped develop and in which they expressed an interest;
- Assist in the design, implementation, and monitoring of efficient communications, documentation, and recordkeeping systems;

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- Review family information with staff; recommend and attend team meetings;
- Participate in community awareness and recruitment events;
- Represent the program on interagency community groups; and,
- Support program research initiatives.

❖ **Controlling**

- Assume primary responsibility for human resources administration related to Family Advocates, including advertising, hiring, orientation, supervision, performance evaluation, and professional development; collaborate with Health and Enrollment Specialists and, as needed, Early Intervention/Mental Health Manager, to evaluate work;
 - Assume primary responsibility for writing, revising, and monitoring the Parent Handbook in collaboration with the other program managers;
 - Encourage and coordinate parent and community volunteer activities throughout the program, including recruitment, training, recordkeeping and reporting; and,
- ❖ Work as a member of the Early Learning team; and,
- ❖ Perform other tasks and responsibilities related to this position, as required.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, & ABILITIES

❖ Knowledge of the following:

- Head Start Performance Standards, the Head Start Act, and other applicable regulations and laws;
- Relevant Pennsylvania regulations and their application, especially child abuse and neglect requirements for mandated reporters;
- Concerns of low-income families, with specific appreciation for the demands placed upon pregnant women, infants, toddlers, preschool children, and their families in program communities;
- Recognition of the parent–child bond as the child’s most significant relationship and of the child’s parents as the child’s primary nurturer and advocate;
- Principles and best practices of family support systems and their implementation;
- Up-to-date local, regional, state, and national resources available and how to access and use them relevant to low-income pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and their families; and,
- Principles and methods of adult supervision including observation, reflective supervision, monitoring and evaluation, and collaborative improvement plan development.

❖ Skill in the following:

- Building and maintaining positive relationships and partnerships with parents, staff, community groups, agencies, and the public;
- Building and working within complex management and services delivery systems collaboratively with other members of the Early Learning team;
- Providing and/or coordinating the delivery of case management services to enrolled families;
- Helping the parents of infants, toddlers, and preschool children advocate and make decisions for themselves and their families;
- Writing and editing; preparing and maintaining written records, reports, work plans, and other operational documents to communicate with a variety of individuals and groups;
- Multiple communication skills, such as speaking, listening, interviewing, and conflict resolution;
- Collaborative supervision of direct service staff; and,

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- Designing and using recordkeeping and reporting systems, including automated management information systems.
- ❖ Ability to do the following:
 - Lead and inspire others;
 - Understand and implement strength-based supervision;
 - Assess complex family problems and determine problem-solving interventions;
 - Take a developmental approach to motivate and empower adults;
 - Orient and instruct supervised staff on program procedures, effective service delivery practices, regulations, laws, and techniques;
 - Monitor and evaluate work of supervised staff and provide technical assistance and guidance;
 - Collect, organize, analyze, and process information quickly and efficiently;
 - Implement administrative procedures and operations and evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness;
 - Be creative, resourceful, and flexible;
 - Establish and maintain effective, collaborative partnerships with staff, parents, Head Start and grantee staff, and community agencies;
 - Demonstrate respect for individuals and groups with varied cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, and linguistic identities or backgrounds;
 - Identify and meet goals, objectives, outcomes, and timelines within broad parameters and work independently of direct supervision; and,
 - Maintain confidentiality and a professional demeanor at all times.