



JOB DESCRIPTION – FAMILY SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Purpose Statement

The job of Family Advocate is done for the purpose/s of providing quality, comprehensive child/family support services to pre-schoolers and their families; providing support, training, and case management to assist parents in meeting the needs of their children and enhancing parents' role as the primary influence on their child's education and development and supporting parents in increasing their economic stability; determining eligibility for program, enrolling families in program, enlisting parental involvement in child educational programs; working with parents in identifying and achieving goals; accessing support services; creating training programs; and facilitating positive parent, school and student relationships.

Essential Functions

1. Recruits selects and enrolls eligible children and families for the purpose of providing comprehensive services, child/family support services and encouraging family involvement, maintaining full enrollment and serving families most in need of services according to federal guidelines.
2. Assesses family and infant/child needs (e.g. conducts surveys, interviews, etc.) for the purpose of determining eligibility and/or developing an action plan to remove barriers to child's success in school.
3. Assists parents in a variety of areas (e.g. filling out forms/surveys, health, nutrition living skills, budgeting, job skills, goal setting, etc.) for the purpose of developing an action plan to remove barriers to child's success in school and supporting the family in basic life skills and economic stability.
4. Orients prospective participants (e.g. site tours, program overview and eligibility requirements, benefits, etc.) for the purpose of establishing familiarity with program, services, and required processes.
5. Provides or assists with providing health screenings, immunization verifications, and outside agency referrals (e.g. hearing, vision, immunization compliance, height/weight relationships, etc.) for the purpose of promoting needed treatment and complying with program requirements.
6. Visits children's homes for the purpose of enrolling students in program, interviewing parents, informing parents of school and/or community resources and providing child development/parenting information, and setting family goals.
7. Plans and facilitates family meetings and parent involvement events (e.g. health and welfare, nutrition, counseling, etc.) for the purpose of providing for family support needs and complying with program regulations.
8. Develops individualized health, nutrition, and family support plans for all enrolled children for the purpose of furthering family goals, plans, and success strategies.

9. Participates in workshops, meetings, community events, etc. (e.g. FS meetings, WAEYC/EHS conferences, etc.) for the purpose of receiving and/or presenting information.
10. Reports suspected incidents (e.g. physical, sexual and/or substance abuse, contagious diseases, etc.) to appropriate parties for the purpose of maintaining student's personal health and safety and adhering to Education Code, district and/or school policies.
11. Provides outreach to low income communities, community leaders and organizations for the purpose of recruiting families to Head Start, developing resources, and building partnerships with community members.
12. Administers Head Start program standards for the purpose of ensuring program eligibility and compliance with mandated regulations.
13. Assists other personnel as may be required for the purpose of ensuring an efficient and effective work environment.
14. Maintains a variety of manual and electronic documents, files and records (e.g., program participation, contact sheets, family file, Child Plus computer program, agency referrals, etc.) for the purpose of providing required information and/or documentation.

Equipment to be Used

1. Telephone and voice mail
2. Copy machines
3. Fax machine
4. Computer software/hardware, including email and internet
5. Classroom equipment/materials

Working Conditions

1. Expected to attend evening meetings.
2. Expected to visit families in their homes.
3. May need to provide transportation for parents and children.
4. Must have the ability to provide an insured car.

Minimum Qualifications

Education and Experience:

- AA in Human Services or Health with two years experience in human service program, or serving low-income families preferred
- Or BA in related health or human services field plus one year experience working with families
- Or MA in human services field or MSW

Allowable Substitute

Degree in other areas plus 2 years related experience and willingness to complete three college-level courses specified by Head Start in the first year of employment.

Preferred Qualifications

- Basic computer skills and some experience with computer applications.
- Qualified former Head Start parents receive preference.

Requirements

1. Submit initial health examination, including screening for TB. (see Medical Release form)
2. Obtain a First Aid and Infant/Child CPR card within 90 days of hiring and keep current.
3. Complete Criminal History, Declaration form and fingerprinting.
4. Obtain a food handlers care within 90 days of hire and keep current.
5. Must have access to a personal vehicle with insurance coverage (unless employer supplies vehicle) and have a valid Washington State driver's license.

Skills and Abilities

1. Ability to identify family strengths and plan/advocate around family goals.
2. Competence in planning, organizing, scheduling, recordkeeping, and staff and parent communications.
3. Ability to relate effectively with children, families, community members, and staff of diverse backgrounds.
4. Ability to build relationships and collaborate with other community agencies.
5. Interest and ability to advocate with and on behalf of low-income, diverse families.