

HEAD START PROGRAM

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant Sample Job Description

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Summary

The Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant (ECMHC) is responsible for providing early childhood mental health consultation support to Head Start staff, children, and families. The ECMHC will provide a broad range of services, including early childhood mental health consultation in classrooms and through home visits; training and coaching staff; screening, assessment and referral services; promotion and marketing of group services; and providing parent trainings. The ECMHC will also collect data, maintain records, and support compliance in all facets of Head Start Performance Standards and State regulations.

Duties & Tasks

1. General Classroom Observations, Consultation & Coaching (40%)

- Visit each classroom at least once per month.
- Provide child development information related to social-emotional development and mental health.
- Provide guidance to staff on selecting, implementing, and interpreting social-emotional screening and assessment tools and findings
- Provide guidance and model developmentally appropriate activities for children and effective ways to work with and support young children.
- Provide written and oral observations and strengths-based feedback to classrooms on an annual basis.
- Meet with classroom teams to review classroom observations and develop and implement plans as needed.

2. Staff Training (10%)

- Support, coordinate, and provide staff trainings related to social-emotional and mental health issues at least once per quarter.

3. Programmatic Consultation (5%)

- Participate in weekly staff team meetings.
- Participate in the development and implementation of mental health program and policy.

4. Parent Training (5%)

- Recruit participants for at least one parent training per year.
- Coordinate and facilitate parent training.

5. Individualized Child- and Family-Centered Observations & Consultation (20%)

- Conduct observations and assessments of individual children as assigned or referred for consultation.
- Meet with families to consult on child and family needs and create or follow-up on plans to support these needs.

6. Individual Child Screening, Assessment & Referral (5%)

- Conduct standardized developmental, behavioral, and/or social-emotional screens and assessments for individual children as assigned or referred for consultation.
- Provide child and family referral and follow-up to community services.

7. Home Visiting (10%)

- Conduct home visits to support the mental health needs of families and children.
- Provide guidance and model developmentally appropriate activities for children and effective ways to work with and support young children.

8. Other (5%)

- Participate in regular supervision with Program Director and clinical supervisor.
- Contribute to federal, state, and local reporting requirements.

SUPERVISION

The ECMHC will report to the Head Start Program Director, who will assign and oversee the work of the ECMHC. Supervision meetings will occur on a weekly basis between the Program Director and ECMHC. Performance evaluations will be conducted at 6 and 12 months post-hire, and annually thereafter. The ECMHC will also participate in biweekly clinical supervision with a licensed professional, who is contracted with the Head Start site.

KNOWLEDGE

- Demonstrated understanding of infant and early childhood mental health.
- Demonstrated understanding of differences in mental health services and concepts across cultures.
- Demonstrated knowledge of child mental health services system.
- Demonstrated experience with clinical documentation.
- Experience formulating and writing assessments and support plans, preferably for young children.
- Experience with evidence-based practices and curricula to promote early childhood mental health is desirable, e.g., Incredible Years, Parents as Teachers.
- Knowledge of Head Start is desirable.

SKILLS

- Build and maintain strong, collaborative relationships with service providers and families.
- Partner with providers as a member of a diverse team.
- Lead and facilitate provider training and/or parent education groups.
- Conduct standardized screens and assessments, preferably for young children.
- Use results of screens and assessments to guide work with families, set goals, and develop individualized plans.
- Refer providers and families to appropriate community services.
- Communicate effectively with diverse groups both verbally and in writing.

- Organize tasks and manage time effectively.

Education & Training

- Master's Degree required, preferably in Social Work, Psychology, Counseling, or related field.
- Clinical license highly desirable.
- Minimum of 2 years direct experience in a mental health setting providing prevention services and/or mental health therapy to children and families.
- Certification as Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP) preferred.
- Bilingual/bicultural English-Spanish strongly preferred.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Ability to manage physically active children ages 3 to 5, including guiding, pursuing, restraining, and withstanding sudden movements.
- Ability to occasionally lift up to 50 pounds.
- Must have valid Driver's License and proof of insurance or must have acceptable alternative transportation.
- Maintain First Aid and CPR certification.
- Maintain compliance with Criminal History Registry.