

JOB DESCRIPTION

MENTAL HEALTH/DISABILITIES SPECIALIST

Under the supervision of the mental health coordinator or disabilities coordinator, the mental health/disabilities specialist shall be responsible to:

1. Conduct observations and provide coaching, mentoring, and technical assistance on effective teacher-child interactions, effective social-emotional practices, child observations, curriculum fidelity, individualization, and responsive learning environments to help instructional staff promote healthy social-emotional development in children and meet the needs of children with disabilities.
2. Conduct ongoing inventories of practice to measure teacher-child interactions, quality learning environments, and implementation of teaching practices with fidelity that promote healthy social emotional development and prevent challenging behaviors.
3. Assist with the facilitation of Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings, case conferences, and parent-teacher conferences to develop and implement Child Behavioral Support Plans.
4. Attend Individual Family Service Plan/Individual Education Plan (IFSP/IEP) and transition planning meetings as directed.
5. Assist the mental health or disabilities coordinator in helping families access mental health and disabilities services and the documentation of follow up services.
6. Assist with entering, reconciling, monitoring, and analyzing program data. Generate timely reports to measure quality of services, compliance, and child and program outcomes,
7. Provide one-to-one reflective strategies for improving teacher-child interactions and how to work with culturally, linguistically, and developmentally diverse groups of children, including children with and at risk for developmental delays and disabilities.
8. Assist with planning and implementing mental health/disabilities pre-service and in-service training sessions for Head Start/Early Head Start management and instructional staff.
9. Maintain current knowledge of the program's curriculum, social-emotional framework and practices, operational procedures, and systems related to the effective delivery of early care and education services.
10. Stay abreast of all special education laws (IDEA Part C and Part B, ADA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act), Head Start Performance Standards, and other applicable federal and state regulations and the implications of these laws for Head Start/Early Head Start programs.
11. Distribute latest research-based resources, professional growth opportunities, and materials.

Mental Health/Disabilities Specialist

12. Attend and/or conduct all required meetings, pre-service, in-service, and other training as directed.
13. All other duties as assigned.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Required Education and Experience:

- Minimum of a bachelor's degree in child development, early childhood education, human development or in a *related field (*see alternate education requirement below*).
- Minimum of three (3) years' experience in a teaching capacity working with young children (birth to five), including children with disabilities.
- Must complete training through California Teaching Pyramid and obtain authorization as a Teaching Pyramid coach within three years of hire as a condition of employment.
- **Alternate Education Requirement: A bachelor's or advanced degree in psychology, sociology, social work, or special education and a minimum of a state-awarded master teacher permit.*

Preferred Criteria: Master's degree in child development or early childhood education and California Teaching Pyramid Coach Certification. Ability to understand and communicate verbally in English and Spanish.

Knowledge and Abilities: Must be knowledgeable of basic requirements of the IEP/IFSP process and inclusion and accommodations for children with disabilities. Knowledge of Windows environment and applications such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Knowledge of early childhood development practices for young children. Knowledge of appropriate early childhood curriculum and environments for children as well as knowledge of Head Start and home-based options. Ability to clearly understand, interpret, and implement early childhood and environmental assessment tools for young children, including provide training on Teaching Pyramid. Ability to communicate effectively with individual staff and in large group settings. Provide guidance and training to staff and parents. provide leadership and stability to teaching staff for program continuity. Ability to collect and analyze data, prepare and maintain reports. Ability to establish and maintain safe, friendly and respectful working relationships with staff, clients, and other professionals. Sensitivity to the needs of low-income families and multicultural beliefs and practices. Ability to maintain strict confidentiality. Ability to work independently, work a flexible schedule and travel throughout Ventura County.

Physical Abilities: Ability to effectively use hands and fingers in the use of computer, keyboard, and other office machines and for completing required paperwork. Ability to clearly see detailed documents and reports. Ability to see at normal distance and hear normal conversations and sounds. Physical ability to bend, squat, sit on floor, skip, run, and climb stairs and stand for prolonged periods of time. Ability to safely drive own or company vehicle.

License or Other Requirements: Must have access to a dependable auto with appropriate insurance coverage and possess a valid state of California driver's license. Must submit to a job-pertinent agency-paid pre-employment physical examination, negative tuberculosis test and criminal record background check. Employment is conditional pending satisfactory results of all required tests and background checks mentioned above. Periodic physical examinations and TB clearances will be required if hired.