



PRELIMINARY

### **Job Description**

**Title:** Family Advocate. (11 month position)  
**Location:** To be determined  
**Reports To:** Family Services Coordinator  
**FLSA Status:** Non-Exempt

### **Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Black Belt Community Foundation is to forge a collective stream of giving from the community and other sources so we, the people of the Black Belt, can enhance our continuing efforts to lift ourselves by taking what we have to make what we need.

### **Role Summary**

The Family Advocate is responsible for implementing the core family partnership, parent involvement, and community partnership functions for the center-based option of a Head Start program. The Family Advocate recruits and enrolls children for the program and then uses a family development model to support and assist a caseload of families as they identify and meet goals they establish in Family Partnership Agreements. This position also assists with the completion of the child health requirements and other required screenings and assessments. This position supports the larger system of social services coordinated by Head Start thereby supporting the goals of the program. The position may involve reassignment of caseload and/or center location as deemed necessary for program operations.

The Family Advocate will ultimately be evaluated on a combination of skills, dispositions and behaviors, some of which are related to the specific service area of this position and others that represent general expectations of all BBCF Head Start employees. They will use knowledge of the principles of family support and case management to collaborate with related service areas and communicate with internal and external stakeholders. They will provide opportunities for families to become involved in program and to interact with one another in parent meetings. Applying a family-centered philosophy in services delivered to children and families they will assist families with building peer support networks in the community. Maintain confidentiality in accordance with the organization's policies and procedures. The Family Advocates will have high expectations for families and works to motivate and inspire them to increase their participation and involvement with their children's education.

### **ESSENTIAL JOB RESPONSIBILITIES**

The family advocate's responsibilities chiefly fall within the following core functions, although s/he may perform other tasks as needed:

- A) Recruitment, Selection, and Enrollment
- B) Family Partnerships
- C) Community Partnerships
- D) Service Coordination and Record Keeping

### **RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND ENROLLMENT**

*Ensure the eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, and attendance to meet the needs of families in response to community assessment.*



1. Recruit those most in need of Head Start services, including previously underserved populations from a defined recruitment area.
2. Select children and families based on approved “Selection Criteria” and maintain a waiting list of eligible children to enroll in the event of attrition.
3. Maintain the funded enrollment level, fill vacancies as they occur, and analyze enrollment data to inform the planning process
4. Monitor absenteeism and provide necessary follow up/family support plan and documenting steps taken and progress.
5. Assist with the completion of the child health screening, other required screens and assessments and understand referral requirements.
6. Plan and facilitate parent orientations and participate/assist with center parent committee meetings.

## **FAMILY PARTNERSHIP BUILDING**

*Engage in a process of collaborative partnership with the families of children receiving Head Start services.*

7. Engage two home visits annually with each family as needed.
8. Ensure meetings and one-on-one interactions are respectful of each family's diversity and cultural background.
9. Ensure opportunities exist for parents to develop relationships with program staff.
10. Work with families on an individualized basis throughout the year to identify family goals, strengths, and necessary services and supports, and to track progress in achieving family goals ( Family Partnership Agreements)
11. Work with parents to identify needs and areas of concern through Family Needs Assessment
12. Work with families to access services and resources responsive to their interests and goals and follow-up with them to ensure the referral met their expectations and circumstances.
13. Provide parent involvement opportunities.
14. Ensure parents are involved in the development of the program services for children, including home visits; parent conferences; the delivery of health care services to children; the development of the curriculum; planning, implementing, and evaluating services for children with disabilities.
15. Ensure parents have opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge in the following areas:
  - Knowledge of child growth and development, the program’s curriculum, the child assessment process, and parenting skills;
  - Prevention of child abuse and neglect; Family literacy;
  - Medical, dental, nutrition, and mental health (encouraging parents to become partners in their children’s health care process and learn the principle of preventative health and safety);
  - Community advocacy (encouraging parents to influence the character and goals of community services); and
  - Transition activities (assisting parents in becoming their children’s advocate as the child moves to public school or another child care setting).
16. Complete a family surveys and consultation with parents about the benefits of parent involvement and about the activities in which parents may choose to participate.
17. Assist and support families in the establishing and maintaining a “medical home” following the guidelines.
18. Coordinate or refer families to opportunities for continuing education, employment training and other employment services through formal or informal networking in the community.
19. Inform custodial parents in single-parent families that participate in programs, activities or services about the availability of child support services for purposes of establishing paternity and acquiring child support and refer eligible parents to child support offices of State and local governments.
20. Arrange for education and other appropriate intervention including opportunities for families to participate in counseling or to receive information on mental health, substance abuse, child abuse and neglect and domestic violence, including crisis intervention, if needed.

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**



*Take an active role in community planning and advocacy to improve the delivery of services to children and families.*

23. Establish collaboration within the grantee agency and across agencies.
24. Promote the access of children, and families, as appropriate, to community services that are responsive to their needs (e.g., child care).
25. Coordinate services for children with disabilities and their families with community agencies.
26. Encourage volunteers to participate in the Head Start program.
27. Support the transitions of families in, through, and out of Head Start.
28. Develop a working knowledge of community resources; conduct annual visits with major agencies for service delivery updates and Community Resource Guide updates.

## **SERVICE COORDINATION**

29. Maintain on-going weekly contact with teaching staff in order to integrate family partnership goals with classroom efforts, ensure integrated child and family curriculum and gain information regarding child performance in the classroom.
30. Provide support consultation to teachers regarding planning, implementing and evaluating Family and Community Partnership goals and objectives and any other particular concerns with families at weekly staff meetings.
31. Maintain regular contact with children in the classroom settings.
32. Coordinate with center staff to promote parent involvement in the program as a classroom visitor, volunteer, employee, and participate in family events.
33. Plan and attend parent committee meetings and family activities.
34. Assist families in making the transition out of the Head Start Program.
35. Completes /assists with health and /or developmental screenings of all Head Start children, if needed, within the 45/90 day requirements.
36. Provide crisis intervention for families as needed.

## **Record Keeping**

37. Maintains and updates child health records and ensures that all documentation is current in child's file and Child Plus
38. Record, monitor and follow up on referrals for support services for reporting requirements.
39. Submit reports as needed and requested, such as monthly summary tracking reports, etc. to appropriate supervisor
40. Understand, generate and document in-kind and other allowable costs applied toward the non-federal share requirement.
41. Ensure that all child files are completed and maintained according to program guidelines and expectations.
42. Utilize Child Plus to document all information regarding each child and family.

## **GENERAL STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

43. Participate in staff meetings, conferences, training sessions and workshops as assigned.
44. Maintain confidentiality in regards to staff and family information.
45. Fulfill role as mandated reporter as stated in Child Abuse and Neglect Policy.
46. Perform any other work-related duties as requested by your supervisor.
47. Be present at work in order to provide consistency of services.  
Be a contributory team member in a positive/productive manner.  
Demonstrate commitment to mission, values, and policies in the performance of daily duties.

## **Requirements:**

- FDC *and/or* AA/AS in social work, education or a related field. BA/BSW preferred.
- Experience and training related to social, human or family services.



- Experience, training, and skills in assisting the parents of young children in advocating and decision-making for their families. Ability to develop positive relationships with children and parents.
- Knowledge of community-based organizations preferred.
- Ability to effectively communicate through verbal and written form.
- Basic computer literacy in email, word processing and internet navigation.
- Work flexible hours to meet the needs of the families.
- Participates in required professional development activities to enhance skills.
- Pass physical examination, background check, and fingerprinting screen.
- Able to lift a child weighing 40 pounds, 20 times a day if needed.
- Maintain certification in CPR and First Aid.

**We are an equal opportunity employer, committed to creating a diverse and healthy work place.**