



## Position Description: Family Development Specialist 1

Department: Early Learning Academy, Home-Based  
Exemption: Exempt  
Reports to: Program Director  
Titles Reporting to Job: May supervise volunteers/interns

### Position Description

Last Reviewed: February 21, 2020

Last Revised: February 21, 2020

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### **Position Summary:**

Casa Central's Early Learning Academy provides high quality, comprehensive early childhood education services for young children, ages birth to five, and their families. The Family Development Specialist (FDS) is responsible for assisting families in supporting their children's development and their family's wellbeing to ensure that children are ready to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. The Family Development Specialist assesses what each family needs; offers resources, information, and support; provides case management and family support services to ensure that children's and family's health, nutrition, developmental, and other goals are met.

### **Essential Duties and Responsibilities:**

#### **Agency**

1. Nurture positive and collaborative working relationships with other agency staff and outside stakeholders and partners.
2. Implement the agency mission, philosophy, and core values to direct daily work and decision-making; adhere to agency policy.
3. Cultivate a professional and respectful work environment.
4. Be actively involved with, and knowledgeable about, the agency's Performance Quality Improvement (PQI) structure and process.
5. Approve timesheets and ensure compliance with agency and funder guidelines, ensuring that daily activities are within the allowable activities approved by the agency.

#### **Early Learning Academy – All Staff**

1. Ensure compliance with all Early/Head Start Program Performance Standards, including as interpreted by the Ounce of Prevention Fund (Grantee), as well as with relevant federal, state, city, and accrediting/licensing body regulations and requirements.

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2. Actively and enthusiastically support recruitment efforts to ensure that the program is fully enrolled year-round.
3. Engage in Active Supervision strategies to support the safety, wellbeing, and appropriate supervision/oversight of children at all times.
4. Act in accordance with the program's Standards of Conduct, building respectful relationships with families, honoring parents/caregivers as their children's first and most important teachers, and maintaining strict child, family, and staff confidentiality at all times.

**Early Learning Academy – Family Development Specialist**

1. Manage a caseload of assigned children and families.
2. Ensure timely, accurate, and comprehensive completion of enrollment processes, which includes accurate completion of all governmental eligibility forms and communicating with the appropriate staff to ensure the program is ready to meet the needs of each unique child and family.
3. Work with the parent/caregiver and teaching team to develop and implement the Family Assessment and Family Partnership Agreement.
4. Coordinate and conduct home visits as needed to support home-school connection address attendance concerns and provide other family supports. Act as case manager for each assigned family and assess the need for intervention; refer and link families to community resources; follow-up with supportive services, assess and document progress toward achieving goals in a timely manner
5. Consult with teaching and other relevant staff around understanding the total child in relation to their environment, family, and culture.
6. Assist in the identification, referral, and follow-up for children with special needs. Provide support to children with special needs, including empowering parents as advocates for their children.
7. Ensure that all families have an ongoing source of continuous accessible health care (medical home, dental home, and insurance) and assist families in securing and obtaining one when needed.
8. Monitor health records to ensure that all children are up to date with their health needs. Documentation present in file and in database.
9. Cooperate with medical, dental, and allied health staff to ensure accurate information about children's growth and development, medical needs, screenings, follow-up treatments, etc.
10. Assess and assist with children's transitional activities as they prepare to transition from Early Head Start to Head Start or Head Start to Kindergarten
11. In conjunction with the Education Coordinator, Teaching Teams, Disabilities & Wellness Promotion Coordinator, Site Director, Wellness Promotion Consultant, and other relevant staff, assist in developing and implementing a plan for children who are experiencing difficulty relating to peers or demonstrating challenging behaviors in the classrooms.
12. Ensure that Family/Child Goals are explained to the parents and that there is a home plan that is being implemented.
13. Represent the family's circumstance and concerns to the teaching teams and other staff.
14. Plan and implement parent education programming using the Parents as Teachers curriculum.
15. Provide information to parents on education activities that can be done at home to enhance early learning.
16. Encourage parent participation in program events, parent meetings, and Policy Committee.
17. Plan and carry out parent meetings and male involvement activities.

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18. Interpret program to parents, community agencies, and organizations.
19. Identify and understand the scope of community resources and how they can meet the needs of children and families served.
20. Provide assistance and coverage in the classrooms and the program site as needed.
21. Maintain and update family files, ChildPlus, and other documentation required by the program.
22. Participate in the annual Head Start Self-Assessment, COA (Council on Accreditation) Case Record Reviews, and other monitoring and oversight activities; assist with all program reports requiring enrollment and attendance data, as well as family engagement and participation data.
23. Perform other duties as assigned.

**General Requirements:**

Sensitivity to cultural diversity is required. Will be subject to drug and alcohol screening, as well as aptitude and skills testing. To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to perform the essential functions.

**Education/Experience:**

Minimum of a B.A. degree in a human service-related field with a Gateways Level 4 Family Specialist Credential or Portage Project Family Service Credential completed within 18 months of hire.

**Language Skills:**

Bilingual/Bicultural in English and Spanish in both written and verbal formats.

**Computer Literacy & Knowledge Skills Abilities:**

Word processing; spreadsheets; internet skills; data entry skills and in managing Microsoft applications to facilitate communication. Preferred knowledge of ChildPlus or other online database systems.

**Mathematical Skills:**

Basic mathematical skills are required.

**Operating Environment and Working Relationships:**

Ability to work within an interdisciplinary team as a cooperative and supportive team member. Ability to establish relationships with families from diverse backgrounds. Must understand the scope of community resources and how they can meet the needs of children and families served. Knowledge of community resources and capacity to develop community cooperation to ensure families receive comprehensive services. Knowledge of Head Start Performance Standards.

**Decision Making Authority:**

Ability to solve practical problems and deal with a variety of concrete variables in situations where only limited standardization exists. Ability to interpret a variety of instructions furnished in written, oral, or scheduled form and convey needed information with stakeholders in a manner which improves the early learning experience for children/families.

**People Management:**

Ability to utilize reflective practices to provide support to volunteers, interns, and team members.

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**Physical Demands:**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit, talk, and engage in conversation in-person and via telephone. The employee frequently is required to use hands. Must be able to lift a 50 lb. Child.

**Work Environment:**

Characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate. Will work evenings and weekends, as needed. Local travel required for meetings, trainings, and family advocacy and engagement activities.

**Other:**

Must have a valid driver's license, car and insurance—reliable personal transportation is essential for conducting home visits and community-based work (mileage reimbursement provided by the agency). Must have a cell phone with the capability to add applications to communicate with participants and agency staff (monthly cell phone stipend provided by the agency).

**Disclaimer:**

The statements herein are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by the employee in this position. The content of this job description is not intended to be constructed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required of a person in this position.

**I acknowledge and understand that:**

Receipt of the position description does not imply nor create a promise of employment, nor an employment contract of any kind, and that my employment is at-will.

- The job description provides a general summary of the position in which I am employed, that the contents of this job description are job requirements and, at this time, I know of no limitations which would prevent me from performing these functions with or without accommodation. I further understand that it is my responsibility to inform my supervisor at any time that I am unable to perform these functions.
- Job duties, tasks, work hours and work requirements may be changed at any time.

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_