**Title:** Student andFamily Support Specialist

**Reports to:** Clinical Support Manager

**FSLA Status:** Exempt

# Purpose

The primary responsibility of the Student and Family Support Specialist is to work with the children and families of Berkshire County Head Start (BCHS) to strengthen parent/child relationships, assist with the implementation of child and family mental health wellness policies and procedures, and to expand family resources. This position uses knowledge of the principles of family engagement to support families in their role as their child’s first and most important teacher. It encourages parent-child relationships that promote healthy development and the family’s well-being. This position works in coordination with the Clinical Support Manager to coordinate mental health services, DCF service provider meetings, and other service provider meetings as outlined by BCHS program policies and the Office of Head Start.

The Student and Family Support Specialist plays a key role on the Student Intervention Team (SIT) providing programming and services that are responsive to the diversity of the populations served by the agency.

# Essential Duties

## Collaboration

* Fosters relationship-building with leadership team, program staff, partners, and community resources.
* Works collaboratively with leadership and staff to link parent programming and involvement with early learning program and to create meaningful opportunities for family involvement in programming by tapping into their talents, interests, and availability.
* Collaborates with all staff by sharing data, problem solving, acting on recommendations, and/or implementing family/child mental health policies and plans.
* Participates in the intake process (application, screening and registration) in accordance to the program eligibility criteria and policies.
* Shares information with the site team on the child and family for appropriate programming or referral.
* Attends eligibility, IEP, and service provider meetings with public schools as needed.
* Assists and coordinates service provider meetings to ensure comprehensive services and effective referrals for children and families.
* Distributes feedback and assists with mental health staffing meetings as needed.
* Ensures collaboration and communication with BCHS team and the family to provide information on the child’s progress on a regular basis.
* Works with families of incoming students who have identifiable mental health needs to create an entry and classroom plan in collaboration with the Education Site Manager.
* Supports classroom environments

## Family & Community Partnerships

* Schedules appointments and visits with families to complete the screening process and required documents as well as exploring program participation options with the family.
* In partnership with families, develops and supports plans that describe families’ strengths, resources, and needed services. Makes contact with caregivers, as applicable, to develop ongoing relationships.
* Understands, accepts, and is respectful of family values, practices, and expectations. Recognizes there are differences in families’ child rearing practices and family composition.
* Identifies community resources and contacts to continually enhance programming to meet both the needs of the families and the outcomes of the program. Coordinates referrals to other community resources for those children who require further support based on recommendations from program leadership and families.
* Advocates for families in crisis, assisting with problem solving and goal planning to increase their confidence in meeting the needs of their children and family.
* Acts as a liaison with community resources and arranging case conferences where necessary.
* Connects families with opportunities that support family safety and mental and physical health and wellness.

## Regulations, Requirements, and Policies

* Works cooperatively with other staff (mental health, family advocates, teaching, health, disabilities, etc.) to ensure families individual values and practices are incorporated into program initiatives for children and families.
* Ensures that pertinent knowledge about families is appropriately shared with colleagues and

professionals in a way that assures confidentiality and increases service coordination.

* Adheres to the applicable chapters of 258 CMR (Code of Massachusetts Regulations), Rules and Regulations Governing Social Workers.

## Observation, Analysis, and Documentation

* Spends time with children regularly in the classroom and on home visits.
* Maintains complete case files for each child and family, adhering to strict confidentiality and security laws, regulations, and policies.
* Assists with data collection required for analysis and reporting purposes

## Training & Professional Development

* Participates in team and agency meetings as required.

Completes the minimum number of continuing education hours specified for Massachusetts Social Workers License renewal according to the program content and required hours defined in 258 CMR 31.00.

* Attends regular training and professional development events to maintain knowledge of subject matter expertise as defined by individual professional development plan.
* Attends 4 “all staff trainings” and other trainings

# Requirements

## Education

Bachelors’ Degree from an \*accredited institution in Social Work, Psychology, or a related field*.*

## Experience

Minimum of (2) years’ experience in a role in a family services environment

## Licenses or other required Certifications

CPR

Valid Massachusetts driver’s license. Valid vehicle insurance.

## Required Background Checks

Criminal Offenders Record Information (CORI) Sexual Offenders Record Information (SORI)

Fingerprint-based Criminal History Records Information (CHRI) Verification of any required license, certification, or education

*The EEC's tables that list the criminal offenses for Mandatory, Presumptive, and Discretionary Disqualification from employment can be found at this link:*

https:[//w](http://www.mass.gov/lists/new-background-record-check-information-policies-and-regulations#new-)ww[.mass.gov/lists/new-background-record-check-information-policies-and-regulations#new-](http://www.mass.gov/lists/new-background-record-check-information-policies-and-regulations#new-) background-record-check-(brc)-policies:-disqualifications-

## Preferred requirements

Master’s degree in Social Work, Psychology, or a related field*.* Bilingual in English/Spanish.

Licensed by the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Social Work

A combination of the following education and experience may be substituted for the requirements: Master’s Degree and three (1) year experience in a role in a family services environment.

*\*Listed in the US Department of Education’s Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs*

# Knowledge & Skills

* Has knowledge of effective relationship-building practices.
* Maintains knowledge of research-based interventions that support family well-being.
* Has expert knowledge of the social-emotional development of children and adults.
* Demonstrates family advocacy, particularly as it relates to ensuring that community resources are aligned and available to meet the needs of families.
* Is proficient in the most current Microsoft Office Suite programs
* Can work effectively in required technology and/or databases.

## Competencies

***\*Reliability:*** Is utterly reliable, always delivering on promises and maintaining the highest standards of quality

***\*Integrity:*** Demonstrates highest standards of integrity, honesty and openness

***\*Enthusiasm & Engagement*:** Is fully engaged with the organization's values and goals. Is an enthusiastic ambassador for the organization in areas of influence.

***\*Teamwork/Building:*** Participates in team activities that promote effective peer and work relationships. Contributes to a culture of accountability and teamwork with co-workers and leadership.

*\*BC’s Core Values*

**Organizational Relations:** The degree to which the employee collaboratively works with other internal departments, agencies, and/or outside organizations. The level of response to internal and external requests. **Job Knowledge:** The depth and breadth of know-how to perform essential duties and functions of the job.

The level of compliance with degree, certification, and training requirements. Understanding of how individual job performance furthers organizational objectives. Willingness to update and expand skills, knowledge, and training.

**Community Relations:** The level of focus and professional service provided to clients and community partners. The productive relationship with community groups, outside representatives, and businesses within the early education/family advocacy environment. The ability to diffuse problems and maintain a positive image of the organization.

**Reporting** The accuracy and timeliness of records, documents, and reporting. The ability to create, complete, correct, and maintain detailed records. Compliance with established reporting policies and deadlines.

**Interpersonal Relationships:** Develops and maintains strong, genuine, trusting relationships with a wide range of diverse groups including families, coworkers, community partners and board/council members. **Communication:** The ability to effectively communicate with others, both verbally and in writing; the ability to listen and effectively respond. The use of proper written and grammatical skills, and the meaningful application of relevant computer technology.

## Physical Requirements

Tasks involve highly active physical effort: must be able to twist, kneel, stoop, sit on the floor, bend, and sit at a child’s eye level and safely lift up to 50 lbs. Tasks require dexterity in the use of fingers and limbs. Tasks may involve extended periods of time sitting at a workstation and utilizing a keyboard. Must be able to participate and actively supervise children (walking, running, jumping, hopping, kneeling, and bending), as well as assist with the loading and unloading of buses (helping children buckle/unbuckle car seats, manage the stairs).

## Sensory Requirement:

The majority of tasks require manual dexterity. Tasks require visual and hearing acuity. Tasks may involve identifying and distinguishing colors. Tasks require oral communications ability.

# Statements

## EEO/AAP Statement

Berkshire County Head Start is committed to providing **equal employment opportunity** to all individuals regardless of race, color, creed, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by state, federal, or local law.

## ADAAA Statement

Berkshire County Head Start is committed to hiring and providing continued employment to qualified candidates and employees and encourages both prospective and current employees to discuss potential accommodations with the employer. An individual with a disability is qualified if he or she satisfies the skills, experience, and other job-related requirements for a position; and can perform the essential functions of

the position, with or without reasonable accommodations.

This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between Berkshire County Head Start and the employee and is subject to change by Berkshire County Head Start as the needs of the organization and requirements of the job change.

*I have read and understand this job description and hereby certify that I am able to perform this job, with or without reasonable accommodation.*

**Print Name: \_**

**Signature & Date \_**