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| Job Title: | **Early Head Start Child Family Specialist** |
| Department: | **Child & Family Development** |
| Reports to: | **Program Services Coordinator** |
| Grade: | **EC** |
| Supervises: | **N/A** |
| FLSA Status: | **Non-Exempt** |
| Prepared by: | **EHS Program Manager** |
| Date: | **March 30, 2021** |
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| Purpose:  The Early Head Start Child Family Specialist will deliver child development and support services to families in a manner that reflects the NMCAA Head Start Programs goals and expectations as delineated in the local program plans. | |
| Position Objectives:   * To promote and support nurturing relationships between parent/caregivers and their child and provide information and resources that assist parents/caregivers as their child’s first and most important teacher. * To support family well-being through the family partnership process and to assist families in working towards and meeting individualized goals. * To represent NMCAA is a professional, supportive, and knowledgeable manner. | |
| Essential Functions:  ***Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance***   * Promote and recruit for all NMCAA 0-5 programs in collaboration with the Early Head Start Recruitment and Health Specialist (R&H). * Coordinate with the Early Head Start R&H to ensure that openings are filled in a timely manner. * Complete enrollment with new families. * Provide information about the benefits of, and support families in maintaining regular program attendance and engagement at home visits and socializations. * Document and track home visit attendance.   ***Child Screenings and Assessments***   * In collaboration with each child’s parent, and according to the Head Start Program Performance Standards and NMCAA’s Early Head Start program guidelines, complete developmental screenings and assessments to identify concerns regarding a child’s developmental, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills. * If applicable, assist parents in understanding a disability diagnosis and collaborate with diagnostic professionals to identify appropriate service(s) to ensure that each child’s needs are met. * If a child is eligible for services under IDEA, partner with parents and the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA to collaborate and coordinate services.   ***Education and Early Childhood Development***   * In collaboration with parents, and using information from ongoing assessments, plan individualized weekly home visits that enhance secure parent-child relationships, promote the home as a learning environment, and reflect the critical role of parents in the development of their children. * Implement the Parents as Teachers (PAT) home visiting curriculum with each enrolled child/family. * Write developmentally appropriate goals for each enrolled child including those with an IFSP, IEP, or ISP (ISP goals are reviewed quarterly). * Collaborate with the Socialization Specialist to provide group socializations and parent committee meetings in accordance with NMCAA’s Early Head Start guidelines and the Head Start Program Performance Standards. * Work with mental health consultants/staff to provide support to families as needed and/or connect families with mental health services in the community. * Conduct transition activities of each Early Head Start enrollee when moving onward to the next educational setting (a Head Start preschool or other appropriate program). * Use Teaching Strategies GOLD as an online tool to support PAT in establishing developmentally appropriate objectives and learning strategies for each enrollee. * Use Teaching Strategies GOLD as an online tool to record observations of and quarterly assessments of each enrollee.   ***Child Health and Safety***   * Assist families in building partnerships to access community-based health, social services, childcare and education/job training opportunities. * Conduct hearing, vision, and hematocrit screenings as needed and ensure that families receive screening results in a timely manner. * In collaboration with the Early Head Start R&H, monitor ChildPlus health reports to assess the progress made by enrolled families in meeting EHS health requirements, to support families in addressing barriers to meeting these requirements, and identify common gaps in service and barriers to success. * Maintain health and safety guidelines at all socialization experiences and other program activities. * Accomplish the Home Safety Checklist with each enrolled family, supporting the family in making their home a safe environment. * Collaborate with parents to promote children’s health and well-being by providing medical, oral, nutrition and mental health education support services.   ***Community Partnerships***   * Establish community and outside agency professional contacts as needed to support the family and child’s well-being (ISD, Early On, mental health support, etc.) and team with other community agencies that enrolled families are currently working with to address family needs, strengths, and goals to avoid duplication of effort. * Attend outside agency events, trainings, and growth opportunities to strengthen professional relationships and increase knowledge of available resources.   ***Family Partnerships***   * Using designated program tools, assess EHS family strengths and needs related to the family engagement outcomes as described in the Head Start Parent Family and Community Engagement Framework. * Implement the family partnership process in collaboration with each enrolled family to support family well-being and offer individualized family partnership services based on family interests, needs, and aspirations. * Assist the Family Engagement Specialist and Socialization Specialist in maintaining an up-to-date community resource directory by providing information regarding resource changes and/or the addition of new services and programs. * Assist families in achieving identified goals by reviewing individual progress and revising goals and strategies on an ongoing basis, as necessary. * Link families as appropriate with Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency programs, community resources and service providers, and on-going health care systems to problem solve barriers and address family needs. * Support the Family Engagement Specialist and Socialization Specialist in planning, implementing, and promoting family engagement activities for enrolled families and/or waitlisted families.   ***Facilities, Materials and Equipment***   * Ensure that home visit materials are safe and in good repair. * Support the Socialization Specialist to ensure the socialization environment, equipment and materials are age appropriate, safe and in good repair through ongoing monitoring and use of the Safe Environment Checklist.   ***Management Systems and Procedures***   * Attend monthly recaps, staff trainings, Early Head Start meetings, community meetings and participate in professional growth opportunities as specified by your direct supervisor, the Program Services Coordinator (PSC). * Establish an ongoing communication system with your PSC to ensure supervisory support when any concerns arise around family or staff safety. * Maintain confidential, accurate and up-to-date child and family files per the EHS Child/Family Information Activities and Inventory Guide. * Attend all PSC designated team or county-based meetings to discuss trends in families and community, share resource information, and/or coordinate other shared roles such as newsletters, workshops, socializations. * Adhere to scheduled work hours as required. Socializations and parent committee meetings may require evening and weekend hours. Staff must adjust weekly schedule when this occurs so as not to exceed allotted weekly work hours. * Perform other incidental and related duties as required and assigned. | |
| **Measured by:**   * The accuracy and timeliness of completed work. * The quality of services provided. * Feedback from agency leadership, staff, community partners and families. * Flexibility to adjust to situations and react as necessary for the betterment of the agency. | |
| **Minimum Education:**   * Home-based CDA credential or equivalent coursework as part of an associate or bachelor’s degree. | |
| **Minimum Experience:**   * Prior experience working with low income/at risk families. * Experience working directly with children and families preferred. | |
| **Essential Abilities:**   * Ability to perform physical tasks to carry out specific job duties as outlined. * Ability to meet the State of Michigan and Federal background check requirements. * Ability to meet the State of Michigan physical and TB examination requirements. | |
| **Minimum Skills and Qualities Required:**   * A commitment to the NMCAA philosophy and mission and Cornerstones of Culture along with a willingness to adhere to the NMCAA Child and Family Development Program Guidance Policy. * Demonstrate a strength-based approach in working with families. * Possess effective written and interpersonal communications skills necessary to partner cooperatively with coworkers, families, other agencies, and health entities. * Strong organizational skills with the ability to plan, organize, prioritize, and multitask to work efficiently and effectively. * Knowledge of basic computer skills and office equipment. * Dedication and adherence to confidentiality. * Commitment to engaging in positive interactions with co-workers and clients in a non-judgmental, tactful, and courteous manner. * Ability to suggest innovative approaches in completing job responsibilities. * Desire and ability to work openly and cooperatively as a team member. | |
| **Minimum Physical Expectations:**  **Physical activity that often involves or requires the following:**   * Keyboarding, sitting, phone work and filing. * Extensive time working on a computer. * Car travel * Lifting under 25 lbs. * Bending, stooping, reaching, climbing, kneeling and/or twisting. * Pushing and/or pulling over 25 lbs. but not more than 50 lbs.   **Physical activity that sometimes requires the following:**   * Lifting over 25 lbs. but not more than 50 lbs. | |
| **Minimum Environmental Expectations:**   * Routine use of standard office equipment such as computers, phones, copiers, filing cabinets and fax machines. * Possible exposure to blood and bodily fluids. * Possible exposure to communicable diseases. * Exposure to potential traffic dangers and varying weather conditions when conducting work related travel. | |