

HEAD START MENTAL HEALTH & DISABILITIES SPECIALIST

DEFINITION: Under general direction, performs work of considerable difficulty in providing professional expertise and oversight of the Mental Health and Disabilities services of Navajo Head Start; ensures compliance with the Head Start Performance Standards and applicable local, state and federal regulations through ongoing, consistent review, monitoring and follow up; collaborates with all other Head Start components in order to provide quality controls, training, services and compliance monitoring; develops, implements and maintains ongoing quality assurance and performance process to measure, evaluate and assure quality and performance according to Head Start Performance Standards; performs related work as assigned.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS: This list is ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY and is not a comprehensive listing of all functions and tasks performed by incumbents of this class.

TASKS:

Plans, organizes, direct and supervises a broad range of mental health and disabilities services for Head Start and Early Head Start children, families and staff; implements preventive, intervention, examination, treatment, recommendation, referrals and identification of mental health and disabilities services and problems; develops and implements overall strategic plan consisting of a monitoring component of children's mental health and disabilities requirements; conducts education in collaboration with state and county public health, Indian Health Services and school districts; oversees appropriate referrals for diagnostic examination; identifies and assesses the mental health and disabilities needs of enrolled children through developmental and social emotional screenings and/or classroom observations, compiling information/data on discussions with family and center staff regarding the child's mental health and disabilities needs; prepares reports of each child's developmental needs and participates in the development of Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) with the local school districts; ensures IEP/IFSP correlates with early childhood services and includes goals and objectives stated is developmentally appropriate.

Responds to identified needs and goals and intervenes on behalf of families, children and staff; provides expertise and support in developing high quality childhood environments, materials, practices and early childhood special education services; meets with managers to assure program consistency of curriculum materials and service delivery in compliance with Head Start Performance Standards and to promote problem solving and support to direct service staff; organizes and conducts team performance reviews; assures children in need of special education services are screened, referred, evaluated and able to access services in compliance with state and federal law; compiles and analyzes data used for monitoring outcomes and planning long/short term goals; provides detailed reports which indicates areas of noncompliance and deficiencies according to applicable protocols and performance evaluation standards; provides assistance and consultation to assure that written policies and procedures are updated and assure compliance with standards and regulations.

Maintains internal control mechanisms for program accountability and transparency; meets with management teams and provides technical assistance and support to ensure program effectiveness; assigns and reviews work of staff; conducts performance appraisals; takes appropriate action when necessary; interprets policies and procedures, rules, regulations and directives; serves as Suspected Child Abuse & Neglect (SCAN) Coordinator and the final evaluator of student records and files; serves on committees, panels and advisory boards; develops materials and conducts workshops and presentations; designs, develops and provides training to staff, parents and community partners; participates in meetings and strategy sessions to stay informed of priorities, raise issues and provide feedback; attends

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chapter and community meetings to disseminate information; provides technical assistance and information to stakeholders; researches areas for best practices and system improvements; prepares, interprets and analyzes program student data for purposes of evaluating and measuring educational program services and compliance; attends meetings, training and professional development activities; may perform special projects as assigned by the Assistant Superintendent.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND OTHER CHARACTERISTICS:

Knowledge of the principles and practices of educational administration and processes.
Knowledge of Navajo Nation, Head Start Performance Standards, federal, state and local laws, codes, regulation and guidelines governing aspects of tribal operations relative to program responsibilities.
Knowledge of budget and reporting systems, program analysis and performance measures.
Knowledge of quality improvement processes, protocols, changes and updates.
Knowledge of program operation activities, mission and client service requirements.
Knowledge of data collection and information processes and systems.
Skill in developing and analyzing program strategic plans, operating systems, procedures and controls.
Skill in developing and executing documents and reports, short and long term goals and objectives and program performance measures.
Skill in managing staff and complex internal relationships, maintaining open communication and effective working relationships.
Skill in providing advice and direction to subordinate managers, supervisors and staff.
Skill in the collection, analysis and evaluation of information to arrive at sound conclusions and recommendations.
Skill in researching, compiling and preparing reports and related information.
Skill in oral and written communications; making presentations and providing training.
Ability to analyze complex procedures and systems and develop problem solving strategies.
Ability to supervise and carry out the analysis and preparation of reports and budgets.
Ability to handle highly stressful and sensitive situations in a professional manner.
Ability to interpret and implement complex policies and regulations.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT: Work involves a minimum of physical effort in an office setting.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: A Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education/Development, Early Intervention, Psychology, Behavioral Health or a closely related field; and five (5) years of work experience in early childhood, grants and program management, two (2) years of which must have been in a supervisory capacity; OR a Master's degree in Early Childhood Education/Development, Early Intervention, Psychology, Behavioral Health or a closely related field; and three (3) years of work experience in early childhood, grants and program management, two (2) years of which must have been in a supervisory capacity.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Must pass a criminal background check, fingerprinting and employee assessment prior to date of hire; and must possess a valid state driver's license. Within 90 days of date of hire must obtain a physical examination, a First Aid Certificate, a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certificate and a Navajo Nation Vehicle Operator's Permit.

Depending on the needs of the Nation, some incumbents of the class may be required to demonstrate fluency in both the Navajo and English languages as a condition of employment.