

Job Description – Youth Program Specialist

Organization

Founded in 1987, Our House is a nonprofit organization based in Little Rock, Arkansas. Our House empowers homeless and near-homeless families and individuals to succeed in the workforce, in school, and in life through hard work, wise decision-making, and active participation in the community. Each year, Our House serves over 1,800 unique clients including 1,200 adults and over 600 children. Our House benefits from more than 3,000 distinct volunteers contributing more than 24,000 hours of service each year; \$1.6 million worth of in-kind donations of good and services; and more than 200+ partnering organizations. The diverse workforce that makes up the 80+ person team at Our House includes salaried and hourly staff, AmeriCorps and VISTA national service members, interns and resident job trainees. Our House operates on a budget of approximately \$3 million per year. Over the last decade, Our House has experienced tremendous growth, with an operating budget that has quintupled in size since 2007 and a campus expansion that has included \$10 million in capital investment.

For more information: ourhouseshelter.org

Position

Reporting to the Youth Program Manager, the Youth Program Specialist will work full-time in Our House's Youth Development Center, Our Club, which serves 90 school age youth in grades Kindergarten-12th grade. Our Club operates every day after school and all day during school breaks (winter break, spring break) and teacher in-service days. Our Club also operates a Summer Program for eight weeks over the summer. The Youth Program Specialist is responsible for providing a safe and enriching out-of-school program in accordance with Arkansas' Minimum Licensing Standards for School Age Programs.

The Youth Program Specialist will also be responsible for working with the staff of our housing programs to ensure that they meet the needs of the youth who live in shelter or our family housing facility and working with the staff of the Career Center and Case Managers on shared goals related to parenting skills and parenting education. Additionally, the Youth Program Specialist will incorporate the two-generation approach to service of youth and parents.

Responsibilities

The Youth Program Specialist will be responsible for integrating Positive Youth Development in our program, including: physical and psychological safety, appropriate structure and schedule, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, opportunities for community service, opportunities for skill building, and the integration of family, school, and community efforts.

Examples of this include:

- Create an enriching, fun and safe environment for the youth that is led by youth input and feedback
- Build youth's esteem; Be alert and responsive to youth
- Demonstrate competence in daily classroom management
- Implement positive discipline when required
- Integrate special needs youth in a positive and respectful manner
- Develop relationships with the youth and nurture them through sometimes difficult situations

The Youth Program Specialist will be responsible for developing and implementing age appropriate programming for the youth. Examples of this include:

- Along with the AmeriCorps Members, planning age appropriate enrichment activities in the programmatic areas: STEM, Cultural Enrichment, Health/Nutrition/Physical Fitness, Arts, and Life Skills, that both engage and educate the youth
- Working with the youth on their daily homework and provide appropriate tutoring when needed, while understanding and incorporating the AR Dept. of Education K-12 Frameworks; communicating with the youth's schools and teachers about assignments or issues
- Planning educational and fun field trips during school breaks and summer, and submitting a budget for those trips to Youth Program Manager
- Implementing Project Based Learning throughout the course of the year

The Youth Program Specialist will have a general understanding of best practices in the field and will align programming with external quality improvement initiatives, including YPQA and other grant requirements. Examples of this include:

- Participate in YPQA and ensure that program meets and exceeds YPQA standards and formulate ongoing quality improvement plans
- Have a solid understanding of Youth Program grants and funding sources as well participating in the requirements that go with those grants in order to prepare monthly reports
- Understand the School Age Minimum Licensing Requirements and ensure that Our Club is meeting those requirements
- Ensure that best practices are being used by everyone in the classroom, including AmeriCorps Members, volunteers, partners, etc.
- Participate in and/or conduct assessments on all of the youth on a quarterly basis

The Youth Program Specialist will communicate with parents, members of the community, and professionals. Examples of this include:

- Discuss youth's development and behavior with parents on a daily basis as needed
- Discuss identified needs and referrals with professionals as appropriate, i.e. New Beginnings
- Participate in and promote Our Club and Our House activities (Family Fun Night, Be Your Child's Best Advocate, etc.)

The Youth Program Specialist will work alongside National Service Members who are serving their term in Our Club. Examples of this include:

- Communicate all programmatic norms and procedures to as well as lead National Service Members in your classroom
- Work alongside National Service Members to ensure that they are able to fully carry out lessons and activities that they have prepared for the class
- Ensure that all Our Club expectations are being fulfilled, and that the AmeriCorps Members feel part of the Our Club team.

Perform other related duties as required

- Complete a minimum of 30 clock hours of professional development every year
- Be familiar with and able to execute all emergency procedures
- Lead all team members and volunteers in the classroom

Qualifications

The Youth Program Specialist will be thoroughly committed to Our House's mission. All candidates must enjoy working with school-aged youth, have a positive attitude and serve as a role model for the youth in the program. Experience and other qualifications include:

- Bachelor's degree required
- At least 2 years of experience working with youth is preferred

- A background or college courses in education, social work, or psychology preferred
- Ability to work effectively with diverse staff, parents, and community members
- Action-oriented, entrepreneurial, adaptable, and innovative approach to planning
- Ability to work effectively in collaboration with diverse groups of people
- Passion, idealism, integrity, positive attitude, mission-driven, and self-directed
- Must be able to lift 30 lbs.
- Ability to swim is preferred
- Must pass drug test and submit to background checks
- CPR / First Aid certified