

**JOB TITLE:** Youth Peer Specialist

**Status:** Full Time

**SUMMARY:**

The Peer Specialist is an individual with a self-identified lived experience in receiving services and support from mental health, substance use disorder, and/or housing/homeless service providers. The Peer Support Specialist (PSS) assists Youth & Young Adults on their journey to regaining control over their lives. The Peer Support Specialist collaborates with participants to provide individualized and flexible support to engage and include them within the community. The Youth Peer Specialist helps to facilitate their access to resources and supports to maximize their independence and potential, and promote their recovery.

**DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Sharing their personal journey with purpose and positive intent to the youth and young adults that they are supporting.
- Assist and support youth to identify and build community and natural support.
- Collect and share information about community resources, with a focus on youth and young adult resources.
- Assist the young adults and their caregivers or other support networks in understanding the scope and array of services available to them.
- Assist young adult in identifying informal supports.
- Coach youth to identify and describe their needs and goals.
- Collaborate with young adults to strategize around effective self-advocacy within public systems such as Juvenile Justice, Schools, and Community Mental Health Agencies.
- Facilitate youth support group in the community for identified youths.
- Create and maintain a robust resource binder of all community resources that is accessible to all youth and young adults while also ensuring that youth experiencing homelessness have low barriers and fast access to the network of services and supports.
- Provides interventions and emotional support to recently housed clients that promote socialization, recovery, wellness, self-advocacy, development of natural supports, and maintenance of community living skills.
- Provide supportive services to increase interpersonal relationships and leisure skills.
- Engage and connect youth with appropriate mental health and/or substance abuse supports.
- Build high-quality relationships with youth participants to understand the personal experiences of children and youth impacted by homelessness.
- Attend recommended training and conferences to ensure the development of the knowledge base, especially related to domestic violence, sexual exploitation, and human trafficking, and provide safety planning and speedy linkage to specialized support services as needed.
- Ensure all services are provided through a positive youth development, cultural sensitivity, trauma-informed, harm reduction, and housing first lens.
- Participate in the HMIS data system for all client tracking and reporting of services.

- Recruit youth to participate in the local Youth Action Board (YAB) and ensure youth and young adults are able to attend meetings.
- Advocate to ensure that authentic youth voice is integrated into all local decision-making process.
- Participate in relevant CoC meetings and training and uphold YHDP Guiding Principles.

#### **LEADERSHIP:**

- Offer vision, creativity, and enthusiasm to employees and community members to generate the positive thinking of and best practices for young people;
- Maintains meaningful involvement with participants, advocates, donors, and community partners
- Participates in creating and maintaining a workplace that values diversity and is free of racism, sexism, homophobia, and all other discriminatory practices
- Continue to foster and improve an organizational culture that builds on our core value of youth engagement and partnership while assisting in meeting their basic needs.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS**

- High School Diploma or Equivalent
- Must have lived experience with homelessness or fully understand the impact of Youth Homelessness as well as the associated risk and protective factors.
- Understand emotional/behavioral challenges and a willingness to share personal journey with purpose and intent.
- Must have access to modes of transportation, if you have a car; current/valid driver's license, have a valid driving record with a clean driving history and a reliable automobile with proof of auto insurance or demonstrate competency in use of public transportation which can be modeled for young adults being serve
- Demonstrated experience working with youth in professional or nonprofessional capacity
- Demonstrated empathy and support for all youth while also understanding that youth in special populations may need more support and guidance
- Be culturally sensitive and competent.
- Peer Support Certificate required (or to be obtained within 30 days of hire)

#### **COMPETENCIES:**

- **Adaptability** - Adapts to changes in the work environment; No two work days are the same. Manages competing demands; Changes approach or method to best fit the situation; Able to deal with frequent change, delays, or unexpected events.
- **Ethics** - Treats people with respect; Keeps commitments; Maintains confidentiality; Inspires the trust of others; Works ethically and with integrity; upholds organizational values.
- **Diversity** - Demonstrates knowledge of EEO policy; Shows respect and sensitivity for cultural differences; educates others on the value of diversity; promotes a harassment-free environment; Builds a diverse workforce.
- **Professionalism** - Tactfully approaches others; Reacts well under pressure; Treats others with respect and consideration regardless of their status or position; Accepts responsibility for own actions; Follows through on commitments.