

CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
JOB DESCRIPTION - CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES ASSOCIATE

Job Title: Children & Family Services Associate (Adoption)

Department: Care Services

Section: Care, Legal and Regulatory Services

Reports to: Team Leader, Children & Family Services

Direct Reports: NA

Indirect Reports: NA

JOB SUMMARY

The **Children & Family Services Associate (Adoption)** is responsible for providing social services support to improve the social and psychological well-being of children who are at risk and in need of care and protection. The role of the Associate involves undertaking comprehensive assessments and interventions involving children, parents, and families, to determine their needs. Additionally, the Associate will develop intervention plans to address those needs to ensure the safety and well-being of the child. All these services will be delivered in keeping with best practice, while respecting and promoting the rights of the child.

When carrying out this responsibility the Associate will be required to appear before the courts and access children where they live in private homes and community residences.

All activities must be geared towards maintaining the highest levels of service to all internal and external stakeholders and clients, must be sensitive to children's issues, must conform to the guidelines and standards set by the Authority and to all legal, regulatory and statutory requirements.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

- i. Contribute to the overall effectiveness of the Authority by implementing the children and families services framework, structures, systems, policies, programmes and protocols to support the Authority's mandate.
- ii. Assess the circumstances of each child referred, determine their needs and formulate long term plans for meeting those needs; focusing on the goal of preserving the family, reunifying the family, or achieving permanent placement in another family unit.
- iii. Counsel children and families on a wide range of social issues including mental health, poverty, unemployment, substance abuse, physical abuse, rehabilitation, social adjustment, child care, medical care and assist them

- in determining strategies and actions to resolve and improve their situation.
- iv. Attend court as part of a team that makes a petition to the court or provide testimony on behalf of a child.
 - v. Work collaboratively with community residences and other residential placements to guide them in the development of Care Plans and other interventions to support and improve the well-being of the child.
 - vi. Refer clients to community resources for social services such as job placement, debt counseling, legal aid, housing, medical treatment, or financial assistance.
 - vii. Coordinate services for clients with multi-disciplinary professionals in order for a comprehensive investigation to be completed with as little trauma to the child as possible.
 - viii. Establish and maintain cooperative relationships with community agencies and resources which provide support services to children and families so that appropriate referrals can be made or support services accessed.
 - ix. Interact meaningfully with persons and organisations that refer children to the Authority with a view to understanding the issues related to the child so that decisions can be taken in the best interest of the child.
 - x. Serve as advocates/liaisons between children and service providers such as homes, schools, family services, child guidance clinics, courts, protective services, doctors, and other contacts, to help them integrate and maximise the benefits received.
 - xi. Work collaboratively with ad hoc and specialised teams established to address issues related to Assessment & Evaluation; Foster Care; Residential Placement and Family Reintegration for children.
 - xii. Establish a regime to provide regular visits to children in care to assess and maintain their safety and well-being and to ensure that their intervention plans are being implemented.
 - xiii. Maintain documented records of the personal history, interventions and action plans related to each child assessed and submit appropriate reports to the Team Leader.
 - xiv. Maintain professional and technical knowledge by attending educational workshops, reviewing professional publications and participating in

- professional societies and advising on trends in social services management.
- xv. Support the development and maintenance of a team environment by performing other related duties.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, Social Sciences, Psychology, Counselling or related field.
- One (1) years' experience in the social services field would be an asset.
- Voluntary experience working with children and/or families.
- Working knowledge of social services agencies in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Working knowledge of social problems and cultural norms in Trinidad and Tobago, especially as they relate to children.
- Working knowledge of laws relating to the protection of children.
- Working knowledge of social intervention strategies.
- Any other equivalent combination of training and experience will be considered.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Confidentiality with respect to information records concerning families and children.
- Communication (both written and oral) and interpersonal skills.
- Planning and organizational skills.
- Team work skills.
- Analytical and problem solving skills.
- Customer service orientation.
- Demonstrable interest in children, their needs and rights.