THE CHILDREN’S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
JOB DESCRIPTION – CHILDREN’S SERVICES ASSOCIATE – CHILD JUSTICE UNIT (TOBAGO)

Job Title: Children’s Services Associate, Child Justice
Department: Child Justice
Section: Care, Legal and Regulatory Services
Reports to: Team Lead, Child Justice
Direct Reports: NA
Indirect Reports: NA

JOB SUMMARY

The Children's Services Associate, Child Justice is responsible for providing social services support to improve the social and psychological well-being of children who are at risk. 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 care plans to address those needs to ensure the rehabilitation 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, as there may be instances where the Courts will bring clients to the attention of the Authority.

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, and must conform to the guidelines and standards set by The Authority and to all legal, regulatory and statutory requirements.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

i. Contributes to the overall effectiveness of the Authority by implementing the Child justice unit framework, structures, systems, policies, programmes and protocols to support the Authority’s mandate.

ii. Conducts social investigations on referrals/complaints regarding children in conflict with the law, which include but are not limited to homes, schools, police station visits, community inquires community residences and make recommendations to the court as per request.
iii. Conduct initial and risk assessments of children who are in conflict with the law to determine their needs, make recommendations regarding placement and formulate plans for meeting those needs; focusing on the goal of preserving the family and rehabilitating the child.

iv. Works collaboratively with Community Residences, Rehabilitation Centers, and other residential placements to guide them in the implementation of Care Plans and other interventions to support and improve the well-being of the child.

v. Establishes a regime to provide regular visits to children in Community Residences, Rehabilitation Centers and other residential placements as necessary to assess the maintenance of their well-being and to ensure that their intervention plans are being implemented.

vi. Attends court as part of a team that makes a petition to the court or provides testimony on behalf of a child.

vii. Prepares comprehensive reports and records of investigative findings, and assessments which corroborate recommend action(s) to the Child Justice Team Leader, Children’s Court and/or Authority’s Legal Team.

viii. Maintains documented records of the personal history, interventions and action plans related to each child and submits appropriate reports to the Team Lead.

ix. Counsels 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.

x. Participates in group workshops with children who display at risk behaviours.

i. Refers clients to community resources for social services such as job placement, debt counseling, legal aid, housing, medical treatment, or financial assistance.
ii. Establishes and maintains cooperative relationships with the Children’s Court, community agencies and resources which provide support services to children and families so that appropriate referrals can be made or support services accessed.

iii. Serves 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 maximize the benefits received.

iv. Maintains professional and technical knowledge by attending educational workshops, reviewing professional publications and participating in professional societies and advising on trends in social services management.

v. Supports 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.
- Working knowledge of laws relating to the rights of the child
- Working knowledge of laws relating to the protection of children
- Experience working with at risk youth children will be an asset
- Two years’ experience in the social services field would be an asset.
- Voluntary/internship 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 social intervention strategies.
• Or equivalent combination of training and experience.

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.